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FOLLOWING MAD ANTHONY

OR

THE DRUMS OF GERMANTOWN

BY T. C. HARBAUGH

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FOLLOWING MAD ANTHONY or The Drums of Germantown. By T. C. Harbaugh.

Following Mad Anthony

Or

The Drums of Germantown

BY

T. C. HARBAUGH

AUTHOR OF

"Under Greene's Banner," "The Tory Plot," "Washington's Young Spy," "In Buff and Blue," etc., etc.

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Following Mad Anthony

CHAPTER I

THE SONG

"SING it again! Yes, give us the rebel song once more. It's the best one I've heard since I landed in this blasted country. Come, my young fellow, sing it and sing it through."

"Yes, let's have it! It would hang some people, but we'll see that it brings you no harm."

Thereupon a young fellow of perhaps seventeen, tall and as straight as an Indian arrow, stepped forward and sang in clear tones as follows:

"He rides like the wind in its fury and might,
He stops for a moment the foemen to fight,
The men of King George doth encumber the plain,
For they fall like the leaves before Anthony Wayne—
Hurrah for Mad Anthony Wayne!

"He's mighty and free and he fears not a crown,
He forces the fortress, he storms thro' the town,
And the king on his throne now is mourning his slain
Who lie in the path of Mad Anthony Wayne—
Hurrah for Mad Anthony Wayne!

"Then drink to the health of this warrior so bold,
Whose deeds thro' the years will forever be told,
The British turn fighting, they charge but in vain,
O'er the fighting and fallen sweeps Anthony Wayne—
Hurrah for Mad Anthony Wayne!"

It was a strange time and place for a song like that.

Philadelphia had fallen into the hands of the British. The battle of Brandywine had witnessed the repulse of the Americans, and Lord Howe had taken possession of the city.

There his redcoats revelled and carried matters with a high hand.

No longer was the city under the rule of "Old Put" who had attempted to keep the British out, and who had ruled the loyalist Quakers with a rod of iron.

"Old Put" was the man for the place and he would have stretched a few necks but for the lenient qualities of Washington, with the result that so long as the Americans held the city, that long did the Quakers foster the spirit of love for the king.

Now, however, the tide had turned, the enemy held Philadelphia, but Washington was just a few miles

outside watching his opportunity, which was soon to come.

The song echoed through a large, high-ceiled room, tenanted by six British officers and the young singer.

They had been having a merry time, bottles and glasses were on the table and, from the hue of the cloth, a good deal of wine had been spilled.

The youth was an excellent singer and his voice went to every part of the room while the officers leaned back in their seats and listened.

This youth, whose name was Ben Markley, delighted to sing the rebel song.

He threw all his soul into it for he was rebel himself—rebel to the core—and it pleased him to throw the hot verses of the ballad into the teeth of the enemy.

"By Jove! that's rebel for you!" cried one of the redcoats as the last word fell from the singer's lips. "It's all I can do to listen to it. I trust we soon shall meet this famous Mad Anthony Wayne—this warrior drover—as he is called. He should adorn the first tree we encounter, eh, boy?"

Young Markley's face flushed, but he kept back the reply that leaped unbidden to his tongue.

"You don't answer me. Come, sirrah, don't hold back on account of your surroundings. Speak your mind, no matter if we are the men of King George."

"Then, let me say that you will have a good time catching Mad Anthony."

"Hear that prophecy, will you, men?" laughed the speaker in red. "He thinks we will never get hold of this rebel general, but he will see differently in a few days."

Ben Markley looked away.

"Come, boys! A toast to the king! And, by the way, we will have our young guest drink the same."

"Not I!" cried Markley. "I was not brought here, I trust, to be thus humiliated."

"Humiliated! Just hear him! Why, it's the highest honor that can be conferred upon any one. 'The health of the king.'" And all rose to their feet with glasses poised in their hands.

"Pick up your glass; it's full!" roared the leader

of the merry set to the boy. "You'll get out of this in a moment and ——"

"But I cannot, sir," broke in young Markley. "I cannot drink the health of your king. He is not mine ——"

"Not yours? By thunder, sir, you shall drink for those words. Not your king, eh? We'll see about that."

Every eye was fastened upon the youth.

But he stood his ground like a hero and did not wince.

"Pick up your glass and drink!" cried the officer again. "Now or never!"

"Let it be never."

The youth spoke calmly.

"The next thing we know you'll be sneaking behind the heels of this rebel general. Mad Anthony Wayne, eh? It's a good name surely, for, from what I've heard of him, he must be crazy."

"Not quite as crazy as you think," smiled young Markley. "Wayne is a good fighter and on several occasions has made your men show him their backs."

"This is worse than ever. Now, young sir, you shall drink to the king."

Ben Markley did not move.

He merely looked into the flushed face of the speaker and then for a moment down at the glass.

"All ready now," cried the toast-master of the little board. "All ready, I say. Here's to King George! May he live to see every rebel in North America dangling from the trees of the forests."

This sentiment was received with yells of delight and glasses were placed at every pair of lips but one.

Ben Markley did not touch his goblet.

"You carried out your words, I see!" roared the officer who had taken the matter of Ben's drinking into his own hands.

"I could not help doing so."

"And you will not drink to the king?"

"I dare not."

"Come, that is no excuse. I will not listen to any excuses. You must."

A defiant look came into the youth's eyes at this.

The other officers saw that their companion was

overheated with wine and did not care to have him embroiled in any way with the young rebel.

The hour was late, for the clocks of old Philadelphia had just tolled off the hour of midnight, and the sentries in the streets below had proclaimed in loud tones, "All is well."

Ben Markley evidently saw that he was in for trouble with the Britisher, for he stepped back and seemed to brace himself against the wall.

They had picked him up on the street under pretense that he was wanted for a certain purpose when, in fact, they wanted him to sing the song he could sing so well.

Now that he had sung it for them they pretended that he had insulted the king, and wanted to show him how mean a British soldier could be.

The drunken officer looked down the table at their enforced guest, but the boy did not show any signs of fear.

In another moment he turned half-way round and looked toward the door.

"Don't let him out, Markern!" shouted the officer.

"He shall not quit this room till he admits that he has insulted the king and makes ample apologies."

At the same time the officer left his chair and came round the table.

Ben Markley watched him keenly.

"Here!" cried the soldier. "I'll wring your young rebel neck unless you act right. Come, confess that you've insulted the king or I'll carry out my threat."

He was almost within arm's reach of the youth and the others were enjoying the scene.

Ben watched the soldier with a good deal of interest, for he felt that in a short time he would have to measure arms with him.

"You won't, eh?" cried the tipsy redcoat. "Why don't you go to your rebel general since you think so much of him?"

"I may join him soon."

"But not until we have dealt with you," was the reply.

The following moment the officer made a pass at the youth, but missed him and sprawled on the floor.

His companions set up a loud laugh and gathered round him.

Ben Markley looked on without sympathy.

As the fallen officer staggered to his feet he let out a mad oath and laid his hand on his sword.

His eyes seemed to flash fire.

"Come, Nolan ——"

"Let me alone. I'm capable of dealing with this young rebel and I intend showing him that he has no right to insult the king of England."

"Of course he has no right, but we ——"

"Silence!" cried the drunken officer as he struck the table with his fist. "Now, young sir, apologize to me or, by my life! I'll show you what an officer of His Majesty's army can do when he dons his fighting garments."

As Ben remained silent the soldier came once more at him and then they met.

It was not the youth's intention to injure the man, but as he came at him so furiously he was forced to throw out his fist and to strike in self-defense.

This he did as well as he could, and, so well was it

done, that the soldier measured his length on the floor under a chair.

Silence fell over the little crowd at this and Ben looked up and down the table wondering what would come next.

"Kill the rebel!" shouted a large man at one end of the table.

"Break his head against the wall!"

"Come, gentlemen," said one more moderate than the others. "Our comrade provoked the youth. He is a little too far gone with wine to-night to listen to a rebel song with calmness. Pick him up there one of you and ——"

"And take it out of the young rebel's hide the next moment?"

"We'll talk about that later."

Some one stooped and pulled the stricken officer to his feet. He looked around with a stare and indications of a pair of black eyes already in sight.

It was seen that the young patriot was amused by the officer's appearance. He just couldn't help it for the sight was quite comical.

"Lemme at him," cried the defeated one as he tried to free himself from his comrade's grasp to get at Ben Markley. "Jus' lemme show him that he can't insult King George, that he can't refuse to drink to his health after singing a rebel song."

But he was held back against his protestations and Ben was caught by the arm and pulled down along the table.

"Get out of here at once," said a voice at his ear. "You won't be safe in this room in five minutes. I'll show you the door."

Young Markley was escorted to the door by the officer who held his arm in his grip. "Now get away as soon as possible. You can go to your General Wayne, or to the devil, for all we care, but see that you don't sing that rebel song too often."

There were loud voices behind Ben which told him that the redcoats were getting angry as they gathered round the victim of his fist, and he saw that it behooved him to get as far from the party as possible.

Therefore he looked up into his benefactor's face as

he reached the threshold and a moment later he had stepped out into the night.

The door closed behind him with a bang.

As the young patriot moved down the street he broke into a light laugh:

"They would have me sing the rebel song and then they got mad about it," he said to himself. "That's just the way with those redcoats. But half of them were drunk back there and that accounts in a great measure for their action. Now I will have something to write to Captain Lowry of Washington's army, and I hope the letter will reach him. My Lord Howe is carrying on with a high hand here and should be curbed."

With this the youth turned a corner, nearly running into a couple of hilarious fellows on their way home, and in another moment he too had disappeared.

CHAPTER II

A SURPRISE FOR MISTRESS BESS

In another part of the city, now under British rule, and at the same time that witnessed some of the events of the preceding chapter, a man who wore the garb of his religion paced the floor like a man under excitement.

He was large and strong.

His smooth face was indicative of power and concentration and his hands, which were large and scrupulously clean, he rubbed together with manifest impatience.

Every now and then he looked toward the door as if he expected to see it fly open and admit some one.

Nearly everybody in Philadelphia knew Thomas Ferguson, the rich Quaker.

The man was childless, but had a niece who dwelt with him in the fine mansion that stood a little way back of the street, with a grove of elegant trees in its

front. Nothing had ever stood between Thomas Ferguson and his desires, so far as money was concerned.

He had all that wealth could buy and all the human heart could wish for.

In years he was not much past fifty and bid fair to reach the allotted threescore and ten.

While he wore the garb of his sect he was not altogether a man of peace.

He had given Putnam a good deal of trouble during that commander's rule in the city, and it was his boast that he was the first to welcome Cornwallis when he reached the city after the battle of the Brandywine.

Thomas Ferguson was loyal to the king, and on several occasions had given freely of his wealth to assist the cause.

As he paced the room he now and then smiled to himself.

But at the same time he did not forget to watch the door, for he was expecting a visitor, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour.

The last rebel soldier had been driven from the city

and Master Ferguson was wont to say that Philadelphia had seen the last of the Continentals.

At last he caught the sound of footsteps beyond the door and paused.

Some one was on the other side.

Suddenly the door opened and a man who looked like a person of importance stood before Ferguson.

The Tory Quaker held out his hand and welcomed his visitor most cordially.

Then he led his caller to a large armchair with cushioned sides and back and bade him be seated.

"Well," began Ferguson, "and how goes it, my dear general?"

"Everything is more than passing fair," was the reply, and the speaker smiled in Ferguson's face. "We cannot hope to meet these audacious rebels very soon, for after the whipping we gave them at the Brandywine they keep their distance."

General Huston was one of the youngest brigadiers in the British army, a great favorite with Lord Howe, and trusted by Cornwallis.

It was a late hour for the transaction of any sort of

business, but he had come to the home of Thomas Ferguson, and it was natural that something of the highest importance had guided his feet thither, else he had remained away.

"I am glad to hear you say that everything is progressing at a satisfactory rate," answered Ferguson. "We must reach out and show these rebels that they are not feared by the king's men. My Lord Cornwallis assured me but to-day that this thing would be done, but, as you know, while we are inactive here, Washington and his rabble may try their hand at a little surprise like they did at Trenton."

The other laughed.

"The same conditions, my dear Thomas, cannot obtain the second time."

"I'm glad to hear you say this," returned Ferguson. "That was a bad affair at Trenton—bad for us, I mean. Who ever heard of such audacity? Here's a man with a ragamuffin army half frozen and stretched for miles along the Delaware in the dead of winter. His sentries die on their posts and when they march the snow becomes red with their blood. But this

same commander, I say, crosses the river at the dead of night and falls upon our post at Trenton, kills its commander, and takes nearly the whole outfit prisoners. Who ever heard of such a thing, I should like to know?"

"It was a terrible blow, that's a fact," admitted Huston. "You see it was one of those surprises that no one ever dreamed of."

"No one but the rebel Washington."

"That is true."

"Well, and why don't we teach him a lesson?"

"I think we did that at Brandywine. And we've driven the rebel congress out of this city, and it is now in our hands. We have full possession."

"That is right, but if we don't look after this same Washington he'll be hammering at the gates of Philadelphia."

"That can never be!" smiled the officer. "But let us come to the other matter, Friend Thomas."

"As you wish. I've been waiting on you for some time."

"I was delayed a little on my way thither. I had

to stop a while on the street and watch a party of our men on their way home from a night of it."

"That's what weakens the king's army in North America," said Ferguson quickly. "It is drink and carouse all the time. Why, sir, if Washington could line the roads with liquor and see that it flowed like water in the captured cities he could just lie back and bide his time. It would not be long before he could capture a lot of stupid men in red, for drunkenness is the curse of the British army in this land."

The officer admitted that this was true, nor did he seek to excuse the prevailing vice.

"Now, sir," he said, turning the subject, "you are ready to talk to me on the other matter?"

"Quite ready, general."

"Where is Mistress Ferguson?"

"She has retired."

"I thought——"

"That I would keep her up till after our conference? I did not see fit to do this for she is a young lady with delicate nerves and I did not think it proper

to let her hear my decision until to-morrow. I hope you will pardon my action in this regard, general——"

"I had hoped to meet Mistress Bess," put in the British officer, "and I must decline to proceed further until she has been apprised of my visit."

The proud Quaker bit his lip and looked away for a moment.

"It shall be as you wish," he said, turning to his visitor. "But I will not be responsible for the mood in which my niece appears to-night."

"Never mind her mood," laughed the other. "She has a right to hear your decision, and——"

"I must say, general, that she has been of late a good deal in the company of a young lady who remained in the city after General Putnam withdrew his forces."

"You mean Mistress Beverley, I suppose?"

"Mistress Priscilla Beverley who came to the city after a certain episode that preceded the surprise at Trenton. It seems that this young woman, who is intensely rebel in her beliefs, came into possession of

certain papers which are believed to have been stolen from Colonel Rall at Trenton a few days before the surprise. She was then staying at the home of a friend of the king's, but when he discovered that she had received those papers he promptly shipped her, and had her escorted to one of our camps where she remained until after the battle of Princeton, when she came to this city."

"These fair rebels are not dangerous," laughed General Huston of the king's army.

"To my notion they are to be watched," was the reply. "As I was saying, Mistress Bess has been of late a good deal in the company of this fair rebel and, as a matter of course—for the minds of girls run in the same channel, you know—she has about turned rebel herself!"

"Not Mistress Ferguson?"

"The same. I could not check her, though I tried. She is not one of these 'dangerous rebels,' but she is sprightly and has ideas of her own."

"It is not what I expected, after all the care you have taken with her."

"These girls get away from the leading strings early in life and form ideas of their own."

"But let us test this young lady. I think I am bold enough to tame her."

Byron Huston crossed his legs and watched Ferguson leave the room.

"Turned rebel, has she?" he mused aloud. "That's a pretty go now, isn't it? Just to think of the thing. Here is a young lady not quite out of her teens, the niece of the biggest king's man in Philadelphia, taking sides with the rebel Washington. And I have bargained for her hand. I wonder why the old fellow sent her to bed when he knew I was coming to-night? She won't show any of her newly imbibed rebel spirit in my presence, for she might get a calling down. Funny, isn't it? Well, Master Huston, you can't fight for the king all the time without making a little love, therefore you are to be excused."

By this time a young girl had been aroused from her dreams and told to descend, dressed, to the parlor, at once.

She stretched and looked first at the man who

stood on the threshold, but said nothing, only nodding obedience.

She hastily dressed herself by the light of several candles and tripped down the stair.

As the door was thrown by her fair hand General Huston fell back with a cry of surprise, for she stood before him in her fresh beauty which, to say the least, was bewildering.

"I must apologize for having sent for you, Mistress Ferguson," he said. "The hour is late, I know, and you have just been disturbed from your 'beauty sleep'; however, I trust you will pardon me, but as this is an important affair in which you are deeply interested ——"

"What!" exclaimed the fair one. "Has Washington or Wayne surprised some of the king's outposts ——?"

"Far from it," said Huston. "We are too sharp for these rebels and they have no chance to steal a march on us."

"Of which no doubt you are glad, General Huston."

"We are quite ready for them no matter at what

hour they come. There will be no more repetitions of Trenton, I can assure you, Mistress Ferguson. But let us come to more important matters."

"I cannot conceive anything that could be of more importance in your mind than the safety of the king's army."

"There is, I assure you, Mistress Ferguson; but I must let your uncle talk."

Whereupon Thomas Ferguson, putting on a grave face which indicated that he was about to say something of great importance, shifted his position a degree and said:

"My dear niece, knowing that you have reached that age when you naturally look for a protector not connected with the family, I have taken the liberty of helping you to a conclusion in a little matter which cannot be but of the greatest benefit to you and your future happiness."

"For which, my dearest uncle, I thank you," was the response accompanied by a curtsey. "I fear I have not deserved this attention on your part, but I shall try to feel grateful."

"She's trying to play a little game of her own," said Huston to himself. "That's easily seen, and she has a mind of her own, I take it, besides."

Meantime Mistress Bess was waiting.

"In short, my dear child—I will not keep you in suspense—I have chosen a husband for you ——"

"For me?" and the next moment the young girl had thrown herself into the Quaker's arms.

Thomas Ferguson, when in certain company, had discarded the "thees" and "thous" of his sect, and, only when with such people did he make use of them.

"A husband for me, my dear uncle!" cried Bess. "How kind and clever you are, to be sure! I never dreamed of such attention on your part."

Ferguson gently disengaged the arms which had encircled his neck and held Mistress Bess almost at arm's length.

"I am glad you take it all in good part," he said. "Life is uncertain during these times of turmoil, and when you have been suitably married off ——"

"Just listen to him, General Huston!" broke in the girl. "Did you ever hear of such kindness on a

guardian's part? A husband for me! Don't you think I am to be congratulated?"

Huston could do nothing but bow.

"Now, since you have taken my action so well, my dear Bess," said Ferguson, "let me have the pleasure of introducing you to your future husband."

As he spoke General Huston rose to his feet and the fair girl was turned about until their eyes met.

"What joke is this and at this hour?" cried the young lady. "Here I am wakened from my beauty sleep and summoned down-stairs to be told that I am to be married. Then I am told also that my welfare is to be placed in the keeping of my friend, Gen. Byron Huston, of the king's army. But this is a pretty play, my dear uncle. This ——"

"It is no play, Mistress Bess," put in the astonished Ferguson. "I was never so much in earnest in all my life."

"Truly, uncle dear?"

"Truly, my child. General Huston has been chosen for your husband, but you are to name the day."

"How clever!" cried the beauty, clapping her hands. "Then I will name it at once. General Huston, I become your wife when the king of England proclaims the colonies free and forever independent." She was at the door with her last word. "Good-night, dear uncle. Good-night, General Huston!" and the next moment she was bounding up the broad staircase again.

CHAPTER III

THE LETTER FROM THE INSIDE

THE following day a youthful officer who was attached to General Wayne's famous "Legion" received a letter which he hastily opened.

It was not very lengthy, but he perused it with a great deal of interest.

As it may have excited the reader's curiosity we give it in full because it is destined to have a bearing on our story and to throw some light on the particular time of which we write.

The letter was dated at Philadelphia, and ran as follows:

"MY DEAR FRIEND:

"I trust this will reach you, as I send it by private post, for the enemy is ever watchful here and we dare not excite his curiosity too far. First of all about myself since I saw you last after the hard, hot day at Brandywine. You will remember, my dear captain, that I disappeared after the last charge, for I saw that I might be needed in the city. I effected my escape by dogging the footsteps of the Fortieth Foot,

which suffered so much from Mad Anthony's spirited attacks that day. They did not discover me and I entered the city with them. I have not been very busy since coming back to Philadelphia, but, at the same time, I haven't relaxed any of my vigilance. We have succeeded in organizing a secret lodge which is known among us as the True Hearts of Liberty. Thus far the enemy remains unsuspicious regarding our order. We have picked up a good deal of information concerning his numbers and plans, and we hope to do still better in the future.

"Last night I fell in with a lot of roystering fellows in red who took forcible possession of me, and the first thing I knew I was in their midst in a large room on Race Street where they were having a great time with cards and wine. I did not know for some little while why I had been taken to the room, but when they called upon me to sing 'Hurrah for Mad Anthony Wayne' I suspected the truth. Those fellows, all of whom were more or less tipsy, wanted to hear a real rebel song and, as they had discovered somehow that I could sing it with gusto, they resolved to have me do so. I professed a decided disinclination to sing it, but at the same time I wanted to din it into their ears for old times' sake. It would be a little revenge after Brandywine, I thought.

"I sang it with all the spirit I could throw into the lines and they applauded it as a good rebel air. Then they wanted me to drink to the king, but that was carrying the joke a little too far. I was perfectly willing

to sing, but to do the other went 'against the grain' as we sometimes say. I resisted as gently as I could at first, but the leader of the party, a boisterous fellow, came at me with a curse and a threat and I was forced to send him reeling under the table. After that I fully expected to have to fight my way to the door and probably would have done so had not another officer come to my assistance and I escaped further insult.

"All of which goes to show, my dear Captain Lowry, that one must watch his p's and q's in Philadelphia while it is in the hands of Lords Howe and Cornwallis. As to other matters it is rumored that a part of the army will soon march out on a hunt for Washington, and I really wish they would, for I would then hear some good news. I am not afraid but that our friends will give a good account of themselves and that Mad Anthony will teach the redcoats another lesson they will not soon forget. They cannot get too many of these lessons, for they are arrogant and insulting, and the Quakers, who are nearly all Tories, are giving them all the aid and comfort they can.

"By the way, there is one Quaker here who would look magnificent at the end of a rope. I refer of course to Master Ferguson who continually hobnobs with the great officers of the line. It is currently reported that his pretty niece, Mistress Bess, is engaged to General Huston of the army, but I am of the opinion that the girl herself has not been consulted in the matter. I had the pleasure of meeting her the

other night under circumstances that led me to believe that she is not the loyalist her uncle is. Truth to tell, friend Lowry, she was actually riding with Mistress Beverley whom you know so well, and I put this and that together, forming an opinion of my own. However, you can hardly tell about these fair creatures these times. I have hopes that Mistress Priscilla will convert Mistress Bess into a rebel, for then we might get news of worth through her, while she remains under her uncle's roof.

"I will write further in the near future, but meanwhile if anything of importance happens I will not hesitate to let you know. By the way, I thought I saw that young Long Island boy, Tom Hapgood, in the city last night, but I cannot think I was correct, for for him to venture here just now would be to put his neck into the halter. And that is the very thing we should avoid if possible. Remember me to Captain Pierce of the Boys of Liberty, who performed such heroic feats at the Brandywine, and say to him that I trust the next fight we have I shall hear an equally good report from them. We must never desert the cause and I am sure that under such a matchless leader as the great and liberty-loving Washington, we shall at last achieve a glorious independence.

"Faithfully yours,

"BENJ. MARKLEY."

Captain Frank Lowry of the Legion read this letter several times before he looked up.

He knew the writer quite well, having met him some time previous to the fight at the Brandywine ford, and he knew, too, that he could be trusted to the limit.

When he had finished the letter for the last time he thrust it into his pocket and strolled through the camp.

Washington, after the fight at Brandywine, had fallen back to a secluded position not far from Philadelphia which had fallen into Lord Howe's hands.

Once the American commander had marched out to give the enemy battle and the two armies stood face to face with one another, ready for the conflict, but a heavy rain-storm broke over their heads rendering the ammunition useless, so that the engagement did not come off.

Perhaps the Americans would have retrieved the disasters of the last battle had they been permitted to attack; but seeing that they were not enabled to do so, they had marched back to their cantonments where Washington busied himself with planning new campaigns.

He was never idle.

Surrounded by generals noted for their indomitable courage, he never lacked for advisers, and with the cool-headed Knox to hold in check the impulsive Wayne, he gave himself over to plans for Lord Howe's overthrow.

Captain Lowry had not proceeded far when he heard his name called and upon looking round he beheld Wayne himself.

It is not necessary for me to depict the character of this foremost friend of liberty at this stage of his career.

He was the most fearless of all the heroes of the Revolution.

Born without fear and dashing and impulsive, Mad Anthony Wayne was the beau ideal of the American army.

His nickname of "Mad Anthony" had been fairly won on more than twenty fields where his desperate charges had struck terror to the hearts of the foe.

It was Wayne who once told Washington that he would storm the infernal regions if he (Washington)

would order the advance, and he meant just what he said.

The future hero of Stony Point was at the time of which we write, September 29, 1777, in the prime of life. His figure was inclined to stoutness and his face was handsome in expression. But in battle this mild face seemed to transform itself into that of a fiend, and his soldiers were ever willing to follow where he led.

Washington trusted Mad Anthony Wayne. He saw in him one of the bulwarks of freedom on this continent, and throughout the whole war there existed between these two great men a spirit of love that others might have emulated.

When Captain Lowry walked toward General Wayne he saw that the famous soldier had something of more than passing interest on his mind.

Wayne did not lead Lowry to his tent, which was close by, but began the conversation at once.

"What is this I hear from the city, Captain Lowry?" asked the general.

Frank Lowry's look was a question.

"Ah, perhaps you have not heard as yet," pro-

ceeded Wayne. "It amounts to this: It is rumored, so the news reaches me, that some of our friends in the city have formed a league for the furtherance of our cause. I heard this the other day and so I sent one Tom Hapgood of the Boys of Liberty into the city."

Captain Lowry started a little for he knew then that Ben Markley must have seen Tom.

"I have heard but little about the league," answered Frank. "I am in receipt of a letter which confirms the report, but beyond that I am in the dark."

"I fully expected a report from my young spy ere this," pursued Wayne. "It is possible that he may have fallen into the hands of the enemy, though I warned him to exercise all the caution possible. However, as you know, Captain Lowry, one is often caught in spite of all this."

Frank Lowry nodded, for the fate of Nathan Hale, the martyr spy of the Revolution, came before his eyes.

"Now, I am not going to send another spy into

that city without first hearing from Private Hapgood; but I would like to have information concerning this Liberty League. I thought perhaps you might have a friend in Philadelphia who would know something about it——"

"I have more than one friend in the city," gently interrupted Frank with some enthusiasm. "I have just received a letter which acquaints me of the formation of the league, but does not give me any particular information regarding it."

"Indeed?" smiled Mad Anthony. "Then I have come to the right place for news."

Frank then told the general all he knew about the True Hearts of Liberty and ended by relating Ben Markley's adventure with the tipsy officers.

The story seemed to please Wayne, for he smiled at the narrative and assured Frank that he would like to meet this bold young patriot who had flung his name into the teeth of the enemy.

"Master Markley can do the cause a great deal of good," remarked Mad Anthony. "In the first place, he is in the right position to extract a good deal of

news from the enemy and secondly he has the courage of his convictions."

"I can heartily recommend Master Markley, for I saw some of his pluck at Brandywine."

"That is good. We will depend on him. Now if Private Hapgood of the Boys of Liberty would only report we would feel better over the situation."

Just then a newcomer was seen approaching and both Frank and Mad Anthony looked at him in silence.

He was an old man, driving a dilapidated looking cart, to which was hitched a diminutive specimen of the donkey race. The driver was seated on a lot of damp hay while he industriously applied a long gad to the withers of the lagging animal.

"Ho! there, stranger," called Wayne, as the old man appeared about to flank them and get away.

The little beast was brought up standing at the voice and the queer specimen on top of the hay looked quizzically at the officer.

"Wot you want with Tim Bowers?" queried the old man.

"Just this way a moment, Master Bowers," said Wayne. "We won't detain you long. Just a minute, please."

"Who be you? Not Washington?"

"I have not that honor," smiled Mad Anthony. "Whence come you?"

"But who be you?"

"I am General Wayne."

"Gee! In the name of Jehoshaphat! the great and only Mad Anthony Wayne?"

"That's what I'm sometimes called."

"Wal, this is luck for sartain. An' you are Mad Anthony? I'll be switched! Want to see me, eh? Wal, I want ter see you, gineral."

The old man began to slide from his hay, but all at once he stopped and peered into Captain Lowry's face.

"Who be this young Tartar, gineral?" he asked.

"Captain Lowry, of the provincial army."

"Purty young, but there's fight in his eye if I mistake not. It's powerful surprisin' how some of these young fellows fight. They say you've got a com-

pany of young chaps in your Legion that fought to a finish at Brandywine."

"Captain Lowry was one of the number," quietly said Mad Anthony.

"You don't tell me!" and the next moment Master Bowers was on the ground holding out his hand to Frank.

"Powerful glad ter see you," he cried. "Fightin' used ter be my forty, but I'm gettin' a little old now. I fought with Braddock at the Monongahela and thar I seed Washington in red fightin' for the king. Times have changed since then. But, gineral, don't let me continue my preface. I'll jes' open the volume at an interestin' p'int. I've jes' come from Philadelphy, and I've got some news for you."

"For me?"

"For Mad Anthony Wayne, ef you are the man, an' I guess you are from what they told me how you'd be lookin'."

CHAPTER IV

UNDER FALSE COLORS

Old Mr. Bowers had seemingly convinced himself that he had found the proper party, for he reached under the bottom of one of his trouser legs and, after feeling there a little while, produced a bit of folded paper which he handed to Mad Anthony.

General Wayne took it with eagerness and looked up at the old man while he held the message in his hand.

"How are our friends in Philadelphia?" he asked.

"I reckon as how you might consult that paper for a full report," was the reply. "I'm merely the messenger, that's all. But I might say in passin' that the enemy is pretty much at hum in the city, seein' as how he has everything his own way."

By this time Mad Anthony had opened the letter which was quite brief and was devouring its contents.

Frank Lowry looked on, but did not interrupt the general.

"It's all right, I reckon?" said Timothy Bowers.

"All right, thank you," answered Wayne and then, as the old man gathered up his lines preparatory for a fresh start, he continued:

"I hope you hadn't any trouble coming through?"

"None ter speak of. I met a few redcoats, but I convinced 'em that old Tim Bowers was the biggest piece of innocence they ever saw. They took me at my word an' let me through."

"You were fortunate, Master Bowers. I believe no answer is required to the letter. I shall report your act to General Washington."

"I ruther you wouldn't do anythin' of the kind, gineral. You see I'm sort o' modest like, an' I don't want the gineral ter think that I'm lookin' for notoriety."

"Very well, then," replied Wayne. "If you're going on, good-morning."

The old man lifted his battered hat, gave the donkey a prod with the gad, and the "procession" started.

The smile over the grotesque picture faded slowly from Mad Anthony's features and he turned to Captain Lowry.

"Here is news indeed," said he. "Our friend Tom Hapgood has fallen into the enemy's hands and ——"

"Will be executed for a spy?"

"Not if we can prevent, Captain Lowry. Here is the letter which one of our friends in the city entrusted to Tim Bowers."

General Wayne handed the message over to Captain Frank who read as follows:

"To General Wayne:

"One Tom Hapgood, said to belong to your Legion, has been apprehended in this city as a spy and, unless rescued, will meet the fate allotted to such persons. He maintains his innocence and the enemy really have no convincing proofs, but he has been recognized as a Long Island boy by several British recruits and you know what this means. He is confined in a building adjoining General Howe's headquarters and the espionage is very strict. If he is to be saved something must be done at once. We are watchful, but fear we cannot rescue him alone.

"Yours for Liberty,

"The True Hearts."

"This confirms the existence of the secret order," said General Wayne, with a glance at Frank. "Our friends will not be able to save Tom Hapgood from

the noose. We must take up the matter ourselves. It is dangerous work, but we must take it up."

"You can use me in the affair in any way you see fit," spoke up Frank.

"Thank you, Captain Lowry. Just now I was thinking about a plan that might succeed. It was this: I suppose no one would be admitted to the presence of the captive. But were some one to be caught under suspicious circumstances—I mean if some one were arrested for a spy—he might be made to share Private Hapgood's captivity."

"That is possible."

"I deem it probable," corrected Mad Anthony. "I have read of just such a case. But let me think the matter over. I do not think our friend is in any immediate danger—that is, he will not be executed to-day."

"There's no telling what these red-coated scoundrels may do."

"We'll take the risk at any rate; 'tis the best we can do. That man Bowers deserves a good deal of credit for his coolness. He would have been hanged

in less than an hour had he fallen into the enemy's hands with this letter in his possession."

"It might be well to send back a verbal answer to the person who gave him that note?"

"Indeed it might. Do you hunt the old man up and tell him to say to that unknown friend of ours that we are on the alert; nothing more is needed. The Unknown will understand it."

Captain Lowry saluted and posted off while Mad Anthony walked in an opposite direction.

It took Frank some little time to unearth the old man and his donkey, but he accomplished his mission at last and delivered his message.

"Master Bowers," said Frank eagerly, "that was a smart chap to send the message to Mad Anthony."

The old man looked at the youth with a smile.

"Chap?" he echoed. "Wal, I never heard a gal called a chap afore."

Frank started and showed his surprise.

"Oh, it was a young lady, was it?" he ejaculated.

"Wal, she looked feminine, that is ef I'm a jedge o' sech things in my old age."

"What was she like, Master Bowers?"

"Come, now. Thar's no gettin' anythin' out o' this old plug," grinned the old man. "In the first place, I wouldn't give the gal away, an' secondly I don't think I ought ter say a word more'n I hev."

"Very well," answered Frank, not a little put out at what Bowers had said. "I only thought I'd like to know who sent the message, for it is important and I may have to look up the person before long."

"I'd advise you ter keep out o' Philadelphy jes' now. It's a regular hornets' nest for any one who don't like King George. Why, they wouldn't stop a minute ter hang you jes' because you belong ter Mad Anthony's Legion which they hate as the devil hates holy water. No, I've said too much already," and the old man struck the lazy donkey with the gad and the animal pulled himself slowly together.

Baffled in his search for information, though he had discovered something, Captain Lowry looked after the holder of the secret, wondering if they would ever meet again.

He was drawn out of his silence by footsteps behind him and he turned to greet a young officer of his own age who smiled cordially as he came up.

The newcomer was Captain Benjamin Pierce of the Boys of Liberty, Frank's companion-in-arms, and a young soldier of great merit.

"What is this about Mistress Beverley's refusal to drink to the king?" asked Benjamin.

Frank shook his head.

"You fetch me news, Benjamin!" he exclaimed. "I have just heard a story about one Ben Markley who did this thing, but nothing as to Priscilla's similar action. When did it happen?"

"Several days ago over in the city."

"It is news to me."

"There must be something in it, though, if some one else did the same thing, one would suppose that the two acts were one and the same. But my information comes pretty direct."

"Through what channels?"

"Through a prisoner whom the picket brought in an hour ago. The fellow tries to play off Tory, but

he walks like a soldier, and it is evident he has been in the ranks."

"And he says that Mistress Beverley refused to drink the king's toast?"

"That is what he says. He states that it was at a banquet given by one of General Howe's officers—one Major John André, I am told. Just how Priscilla came to be present at such a function the prisoner does not state."

"There may be some mistake here. She promised us, you know, Benjamin, to get into no trouble while in the city, and I cannot believe that she would lose her head in this manner. Where is the prisoner?"

"He has just been taken over to the 'pen.'"

"Let me have a talk with him," cried the young captain. "This is important if true. Surely if Priscilla did this thing they did not let it escape unnoticed?"

"It created a good deal of excitement, the prisoner said, but Major André interfered in her behalf and a good deal of the odium has fallen upon him."

Frank Lowry posted off to the spot where the prisoners were confined and asked for the one just brought in.

When he appeared he was left alone with the young provincial who went at him at once.

"What's this about the refusal of Mistress Beverley to drink the king's health?"

"Who told you?"

"Never mind that. You've started the story. Now give me the truth."

"Well, that's just what happened."

"Tell me everything."

"Will it do me any good?" eagerly asked the man.

"It may."

"I'm no soldier," protested the captive. "I am simply John Martin from below."

"You look too much like a soldier to be plain John Martin from below," replied Frank.

"But I am."

"We'll talk about that some other time."

"What will they do with me?"

"We don't do anything with plain prisoners of war; but we hang spies!"

Frank looked the man fairly in the eye while he spoke and saw him quaver.

Then he turned to the guard who stood near and said in tones intended for the prisoner's ears:

"Has this man been searched, guard?"

"I believe not, sir. He was brought in as an ordinary prisoner and it wasn't thought worth while to ——"

The prisoner's voice interrupted the sentry.

"I've lied a little, sir," he said to Captain Frank. "I am not John Martin, but Gerald Redfern of the Royal Reds."

"Ha! so you've changed your tune, have you?" smiled Captain Lowry. "If you can tell one story why not half a dozen? Which one are we to believe? I guess we'd better search you. Here, guard."

The sentry came forward.

"This man has just said that his first story is a lie," Frank said. "It is well to search him at once and thoroughly."

"But ——" began the prisoner. "I am not a spy ——"

"We can't help what you are not. It is what you are that we care about."

The guard was a stalwart fellow and inclined to be rough, and the way he went at his task showed Frank that the duty would be performed to the letter.

The prisoner protested, but with no avail.

He threatened to refer the matter first to General Wayne and then to Washington himself, but Frank stood by and looked on while the soldier went on with his task.

Suddenly every vestige of color left the prisoner's face and he looked appealingly to Frank Lowry.

"Here's a paper!" said the guard with a grin as he pulled a folded sheet from the coat lining on the fellow's left shoulder.

The man was now as white as a cloth.

"For God's sake!" he cried, "don't proceed further!"

"Why not?"

"Because I am relieved of everything I carried on my person."

"Go on, guard," commanded Captain Lowry.

The prisoner, a strong man, sprang up and pushed the guard against the wall of the tent.

His eyes flashed and his breath came and went like the breath of a tiger.

Already he had the poor guard by the throat and was choking him in approved style when Frank, seeing that another minute would settle the sentry's career, dealt the prisoner a blow on the head with the butt of his pistol which caused him to release his hold.

"Let me go!" cried the man, as he recovered and held out his hands to Captain Lowry. "I will tell the truth and give you one thousand pounds for my release. I am neither John Martin nor Redfern of the Royal Reds. I am Captain Lloyd Montressor of the Dragoons, son of the Earl of Seavoy and heir to millions. Let me pass, sir, and I will sprinkle your path with sovereigns. I cannot die the death of the spy. I—I —— Oh, my mother who predicted such a fate for me! Stand aside and let me pass!"

"Let you pass?" cried Captain Lowry, as he planted himself the firmer in the prisoner's presence. "Not for all the millions of the Seavoys!"

The young man looked at Frank a moment, then covered his face with his hands and groaned aloud.

CHAPTER V

THE ENEMY'S PLEDGE

CAPTAIN MONTRESSOR of the royal dragoons found himself in a ticklish place.

He stood a self-confessed spy in the camp of Mad Anthony Wayne, and if he had studied the career of that famous officer well he must have seen that he had a slim chance for escape.

His first story regarding his identity had been disproved by the discovery of the paper in the lining of his coat, and he therefore saw that the best way out of the tangle was a confession. Frank caught on to the truth the moment the paper was placed in his hands, and when he had perused it he knew that the young officer's doom was sealed.

But he sympathized with the young spy.

Montressor was his senior by a few years, but he looked like a manly young fellow, and that is why the heart of the young provincial went out to him even though they were foes.

When the British captain made the last pathetic appeal Frank turned away.

"You will not escort me to your general, will you? You will give me a chance to escape, and I promise you on the honor of a king's man that I will never be caught in such a position again."

It was a trying moment for young Lowry.

But when he thought of his friend Tom Hapgood's peril in Philadelphia his heart grew cold again, and he resolved to let the rules of war deal with the redcoat.

"For heaven's sake, think of my mother!" cried the young officer. "I am her only child. It will kill her. I am only obeying the orders of my general. Curses upon him for sending me upon such a mission as this!"

"I have," said Frank, turning suddenly upon him, "a friend in your camp at this moment who has been arrested as a spy."

"His name?"

"Tom Hapgood."

"Yes, I know."

"What! are you aware of his predicament?"

"I am; I helped to arrest him."

"And what is the proof against him?"

"He was caught in the city and recognized by a man from his native heath on Long Island."

"Was that all?"

"It was a dangerous recognition."

"Perhaps."

"Moreover, he did not try to disguise himself. He admitted that he was from Long Island and also that he had served in the American army."

"Is his service in the cause of liberty to be his condemnation? Were any papers found on his person?"

"Nothing was found upon his person, sir. But you see that one can enact the rôle of spy without having anything compromising with him."

"That is true and you should have remembered that when you entered our lines."

"Fool I was that I did not!" cried the young Briton. "I see my mistake now. But, sir, if you will permit my escape I will see that your friend, Tom Hapgood as you call him, does not pay the penalty

that attaches itself to those who do what he evidently has done."

"But you cannot save him."

"I give you my word of honor that I will save him or present myself here for punishment within forty-eight hours."

Frank looked searchingly at Montressor.

Honesty and frankness beamed in his eye, which seemed to have taken on new hope.

It was a great temptation for the young patriot.

"But let me come to another subject for a moment," Frank said. "What about the young lady who refused to drink the king's health?"

"She did refuse."

"What were the circumstances?"

"There was a ball given by one of our high officers. She came with a friend of hers named Mistress Ferguson. This young girl came, I believe, from Boston, or at least such is the report in our camp. A good deal of hilarity reigned on the occasion and some of our officers became overheated with wine. Toasts were proposed and drunk and at last some one proposed

one to the king's health, when what did this young woman do but turn her goblet down."

"It was a bold move."

"Nothing could have been bolder. Of course it attracted the attention of all. She became the cynosure of all eyes and, as she stood at the head of the table, she was the observed of all observers."

"They tried to force her to drink the king's health, I suppose?"

"They did. There was a great uproar, for it was an act which could not be permitted to escape. There would have been violence perhaps had not Major John André, than whom there is not a more chivalrous man in our army, stood between the young lady and her enemies. He got her out of the muddle as diplomatically as he could for he is noted for his shrewdness, and the upshot of the whole matter was that the fair rebel, if you will allow me the expression, left the house before the ball was over."

"So that is the story of the rebel of the Quaker City?" said Frank with a smile. "She is now under the ban, I presume?"

"Decidedly so."

"And ostracized?"

"So far as our society goes, certainly. Not only this, but she is in danger of insult and her friends should see that she is removed from the city as soon as possible."

"Or she will be regarded as a secret agent of Washington's?"

"That is it precisely."

"And will probably be arrested?"

"For her sake I fear so."

"But you have not told me the name of this offending fair one."

"She is a Mistress Beverley."

"Ah!" exclaimed young Lowry, although he had already guessed the identity of the young lady. "They should not have pressed her so closely knowing, as they probably did, that she came from Boston where our people are hot against the king. Wasn't it a plot or something of the kind to draw her out and get her into trouble?"

"I have heard inklings of that."

"Indeed! And is this the chivalry of your soldiers —to get a young lady into a predicament like that?"

Young Montressor flushed.

"It takes all sorts of men to make up an army, you understand," he said.

"That is true and a pity 'tis 'tis true," replied Frank, remembering his Shakespeare. "Who was at the head of this conspiracy against Mistress Beverley?"

"I have heard a rumor, nothing more."

"Well, what does Dame Rumor say?"

"She fixes the blame upon one Lieutenant Cummings of the Queen's Rangers."

"A roystering young blade, eh?"

"An impulsive young fellow famous for his conquests of women's hearts. I know but little about him and a good deal of that is hearsay."

"What could his motive have been, think you?"

"It is said that he wanted to ingratiate himself into Mistress Beverley's graces and that she repelled him."

"When, like the serpent, he turned on her and thought to get her into trouble."

"It looks that way."

"The infamous scoundrel!" cried Frank.

"Is Mistress Beverley a friend of yours?" asked Captain Montressor.

"I know of her," admitted Frank.

"She is quite beautiful and vivacious," was the reply. "I met her once and was charmed by her presence."

"Well, sir," and young Lowry looked again into the deep hazel eyes of the prisoner. "You promise to get Tom Hapgood out of durance if you are released without trial?"

"Upon my sacred honor!"

"And if you fail you promise to come back here for trial before Mad Anthony's court?"

"I promise!" cried the young Englishman, holding up his hand in the most solemn manner. "It is the oath of a true Briton, one who has enlisted in the cause of his king. Ah! sir, you will find som honor among us if you but look for it. We are not all tyrants and oppressors, but in our army there is a sprinkling of honor and fair dealing. This is a war of a king against his subjects who have rebelled and

he would bring them back under the shadow of the throne."

"We will not argue the right or the wrong of the war," said Frank, with a wave of the hand. "We believe differently from you and you could not convince me that we have no right to rebel against the power of the throne. Were I to consent to your release without consulting General Wayne I would perhaps be hanged in your place."

"Surely he is not that cruel."

"He is severe and—just," answered Frank with a glow of pride.

"Then, sir, I would not advise you to set me free."

"Not to save your own life?"

"Not to save my life!"

This chivalrous reply went to the depths of Lowry's heart.

He stepped forward and took young Montressor's hand.

"I will take your pledged word!" he exclaimed. "I will take the blame and the risk. Captain Montressor, you are free!"

"Free?"

The word fell from the young soldier's tongue like a cry of delight.

"Remember that you place yourself in my shoes," he said, looking at Frank.

"I understand it well."

"And I will keep my word. If at the end of forty-eight hours the prisoner and spy, Tom Hapgood, is not at liberty, I will present myself here for punishment as a British spy."

"It is well. Remember the compact!"

The guard who had heard this conversation looked at Captain Lowry, but said nothing.

"Your escape from the camp will not be difficult," pursued Frank. "Once beyond our lines and you will be safe. But promise me that the paper found on your person is the only one of the kind."

"Upon the honor of a Seavoy!" was the reply. "I have nothing compromising on my person now."

"That will do. I take you at your word, Captain Montressor."

"And I will never forget your kindness."

Frank again pressed the young soldier's hand and withdrew, first nodding to the guard who gave him a look in reply.

Ten minutes later when Captain Lowry came back the guard was not to be seen.

He knew that Montressor was gone and secretly wished him a safe journey back to the British lines.

As for himself Frank knew that he had committed a serious breach of military law.

He had aided in the escape of a person arrested within the lines as a spy and should Mad Anthony hear of it his own arrest would follow.

He was about to enter his own tent when he heard footsteps behind him and one of Wayne's aids confronted him as he turned.

"Captain Lowry?"

"Yes, sir."

"The general wants you immediately."

A thrill went through every fibre of the young patriot's frame.

"If Mad Anthony has heard of the arrest and escape I am in for it," he said to himself.

What he feared had happened as he suspected from the countenance that met his gaze as he passed into Mad Anthony's tent.

General Wayne looked searchingly into the face of the young captain for a moment and his countenance was severe.

"Captain Lowry, you will conduct to me at once the young man recently caught within our lines—the person who styles himself John Martin."

Frank was silent for a moment.

"The suspect is not in the camp just now."

Wayne looked surprised and his face darkened.

"But he was under guard, I am told."

"He was under guard. But I gave him his liberty."

"You?" was the retort. "What authority had you to release a suspect without trial?

"I did it for the purpose of saving Tom Hapgood's life."

"I cannot see how the release of a spy—for he was doubtless one—can effect the salvation of our young friend arrested in the enemy's camp."

Thereupon, putting a bold face on the matter,

Frank related the story of the release of Captain Montressor to which Mad Anthony listened without comment.

"Very well," bluffly said Wayne at the close. "If at the end of forty-eight hours we do not see Tom Hapgood or Captain Montressor in this camp I shall hold you responsible."

CHAPTER VI

WITHIN THE SHADOW

MEANTIME matters did look dark for the young Long Islander cooped up in a little room in the Quaker City.

He had entered the place at the request of General Wayne for the purpose of obtaining certain information deemed important by that officer and had fallen into the hands of the British through a man who had known him on his native island.

Tom had served the colonies well, fighting in the ranks of the Boys of Liberty commanded, as we know, by Captain Benjamin Pierce, and he had on several occasions come under the eye of Washington and been complimented for his bravery.

His father had been hanged by the British and this had brought forth all the revenge in his nature and he had taken an oath that he would never spare the life of a redcoat.

This fact which was now in the enemy's possession

rendered the situation darker than ever for the young fellow and he could not see a ray of light ahead.

Leaning against the wall at about the same hour that witnessed the interview between the two young captains in the American camp, Tom Hapgood gave way for a moment to his emotions.

He did not regret the step he had taken—not he—for it was for liberty's sake; he was ready at all times to die for his belief, but he did not like to perish on the scaffold with the stigma attached to a death of that nature upon him.

He thought of his childhood days while he looked at his meagre surroundings which kept out the sunshine, and whenever he heard the roll of drums, as he did at frequent intervals, he started and yearned anew for freedom.

True no compromising papers had been found on his person, but he knew that their absence would not save him.

The British wanted a victim and he would become the one.

He had been questioned several times by cunning

men and they had prejudged him, so that he felt that all that was to be done in his case was to march him out between a file of soldiers and put him to death.

Suddenly his musings were disturbed by footsteps in the corridor beyond the door and he listened again.

He heard the key turn in the lock—a great, old-fashioned thing—and the heavy oaken portal swung slowly open.

Tom leaned forward, for the light was poor, and saw before him a tall man with a darkly flowing beard.

This man came forward until he could see the prisoner when he stopped.

"So you're here yet, my bird?" queried this personage with a grin of delight.

"How can I get out with these on my legs?" and Tom threw one foot forward to show his visitor the ball and chain by which he was secured.

"They're not conducive to freedom, I'll admit that," said the man.

"You're very kind, I'm sure."

"They must think you're an important prisoner?"

"Perhaps I am. And not satisfied with the chain, they mount a guard over me. You must have seen the guard as you came in."

"I did, sir. You know the penalty, young sir?"

"The penalty for what? You mystify me."

Thereupon the man leaned against the wall and broke into a little laugh.

"You're an innocent chicken," he said, looking at Tom. "They've got you dead to rights and you don't suppose that my Lord Cornwallis intends to open the door and let you out?"

"I don't see why I am held, if that is what you want to hear," replied Tom with courage. "They picked me up and on the word of a fellow who declares that he once knew me somewhere on Long Island, where there are plenty of young chaps like me. Your Lords Cornwallis and Howe seem eager to listen to any kind of story and that is why I'm cooped up here."

"To have your neck wrung like the game cock you are."

"I shall not be surprised at anything they do with me."

"But you don't deny that your name is Tom Hapgood, nor that some of our people hanged your father for a rebel over on Long Island."

At this fire flashed up in Tom's eyes and his hands clinched in spite of himself.

"Who told you all this, sir?" he demanded. "The fellow who got me into this?"

"Perhaps and perhaps not. Say, didn't we hang your father?"

This was more than Tom could stand and he threw himself forward, dragging his chains as he exclaimed:

"You boast of that infamous deed, do you? Perhaps you were one of the band that orphaned me."

The man shrank back from the fury of the young patriot's eyes and stood at a goodly distance looking into his face.

"Well, I thought I would get the truth from your own lips," was the remark, as the man smiled. "They said I couldn't do it, but I told them I would. I've won my twenty shillings."

"And if I were free you would never enjoy them!" roared Tom. "You would never get to spend one of them at the tap-rooms of this city."

"Thanks, my young tiger. They intend to attend to your case in the morning. It's a pity to hang a young fellow like you, but they don't want to be bothered with such. They say you came direct from the rebel camp where you belong to Mad Anthony's Legion ——"

"I'd sooner be Mad Anthony's hostler than a major-general in the service of King George."

"By heavens! you're plucky, but just wait, my young fellow. When the rope tightens round your neck you'll wish you had never expressed such sentiments."

"Never!"

"Well, adieu till then. I have won my bet and that was all I wanted. You should have had a little more sense, for the moment you entered the city you were a marked person."

The man stepped to the door and laid his hand on the knob.

Looking over his shoulder he eyed Tom from head to foot and grinned again.

"You don't hope to escape, do you?"

Tom's reply was a glance of derision.

"You have some friends outside, but they are powerless. They can't do anything for you and I would advise you to make your peace with the Master for it will soon be too late. I say, young man, if you would make a full confession it would relieve your own mind and give you a better passport to the other world."

Tom Hapgood with a cry stooped and, snatching up the heavy ball which was riveted to the chain, rushed upon his tormentor.

The man backed to the door and threw up his hands with a cry of terror.

"Don't touch me!" he cried. "Don't you strike me with that, you young tiger."

"Get out of here then or I'll brain you against the door!"

"Give me time."

"Not a minute of time! Open the door and go!"

The man tried to do so, but his fingers trembled so under a paroxysm of fear that Tom had to smile.

"Get out or death shall be your portion!" continued the young patriot. "I might as well take some Britisher with me as not."

By this time the man had found the door and was struggling to open it.

He accomplished this feat at last, though the time seemed hours, and all at once he shot from the place and vanished.

Hapgood heard the door locked on the outside and fell back, dropping the iron ball to the floor.

"I almost wish I had brained the scoundrel!" he said to himself. "He wagered against my identity and my life. They have foredoomed me, and if I cannot effect my escape —— But what's this?"

A bit of paper lay on the floor at his feet and in a moment it was in his possession.

He was sure it had come in with the man, for he had looked over the floor while musing in his cell and it had not met his gaze.

His heart thrilled at the thought that a message had

come from the outside world and in a moment he had eagerly opened the folded sheet.

The writing on the paper was brief, but strange. Tom read it again and again.

At the end of each reading he would look up and wonder from whom it could have come, for its message was so very strange.

"I never saw anything like this," mused the young captive. "There is no name signed to the message, yet it is intended for me. And what does it say? Only this: 'The river always reaches the sea. And the mariner finds the ocean of sunshine and freedom through the storms.' It is a strange message. What does it really mean? Does it mean that I am to be saved? And by whom? Not by the man who has just gone. It is a mystery, yet it must have been sent in to me by that same man. I can only wait," and the young provincial hid the message in his bosom and reflected over it until it grew deeper and darker and passed his comprehension.

The day lengthened and Tom, with the words of the singular message constantly recurring to him, sat

on his low cot in his prison cell and mused more than ever.

He could not solve the mystery.

Now and then he would start as footsteps sounded in the corridor, but the door did not open again.

He heard the guards changed and then a plate of food was slipped into the cell through an opening made for that purpose at the bottom of the door.

Study had rendered him hungry and, as he had nothing to do but to eat and sleep, he fell to with gusto and devoured the meal, wiping the tin plate eagerly with his hands.

"Yes," said he, "I know that the sea is sometimes reached through the darkest storms that sweep over the rivers, but I am not on a ship just now. Who sent that strange note and why? I must have friends in the city, but they may not know of my arrest. General Wayne could get no message to me and I can send him none. I wonder if Frank and Benjamin know of my predicament? If they did they would not hesitate to try to get me out of this, but I am cooped up beyond the shadow of release save by

death and that by the rope! Well, the gallant Hale died that way. Why not Tom Hapgood?"

The young Long Islander pushed his empty plate away and threw himself upon the hard cot against the wall.

There seemed not the slightest ray of hope despite the mysterious note and he had almost ceased to think of that. After all it might be but the trick of some enemy—a trick to fill him with hope in order to render his last moments the more galling.

He would dismiss it entirely from his mind; he would cease to think of it; he would look beyond the tricks of the enemy and trust to luck or to true friends on the outside for help.

The shadows of the trees in the streets were growing long and a cool wind coming up from the Delaware entered the cell and fanned the hot cheeks of the young Long Islander.

Suddenly he heard footsteps again.

"Not for me," he said to himself as they passed the door. "Some other wretch is to be visited. But,

whatever happens, they don't get me to come over to the king. No! I belong to Mad Anthony and as a member of the Legion I will die."

Presently the footsteps came back and stopped at the door.

"Another emissary, I suppose," thought Tom.

"Is this the door?" asked a voice outside.

"That's the place where the young spy is."

"Open it, then."

"I have no key." It was the voice of the guard. "You will have to show a passport to the prisoner if you ever see him."

"Oho! that's the way you're doing business, is it? Passport from whom, please?"

"From His Excellency General Lord Howe."

"Is the captive so important as all that?"

"My Lord Howe thinks so at least."

"Then to him I must go, I reckon. It's a pretty thing when a gentleman must have a passport to the person of a rebel spy."

"It's my orders, sir."

"To hades with your orders, but I guess I will have

to measure off a few yards of red tape to get beyond that door. Why, I could kick it down ——"

"Better not try it, sir."

"I won't. But I'll get the order. Say, guard, when do you think they are going to deal with the fellow in there?"

"By daylight, I reckon."

"So soon as that?"

"What's the use in keeping him longer? Every time we feed him he takes a soldier's ration, and it's beastly slow duty guarding the young scamp."

"Oh, he's young, then?"

"Yes, but not too young, they say, to have fought us at Brandywine. Young tigers bite hard, you know."

At this the guard laughed and Tom heard footsteps move away.

"Another visitor!" thought he. "But who the dickens can he be?"

CHAPTER VII

PRISCILLA'S VICTORY

THE British army in and around Philadelphia felt itself perfectly secure.

In consequence of this security Howe feasted and carried on in great style while the little army by whom he was watched was half starved and illy clothed.

The British gave balls that were the envy of thousands and the red-coated officers were the gayest of the gay.

The victory at Brandywine had given the British new prestige, and they thought that within a short time they would have the pleasure of bagging Washington and his whole command.

The Quaker element in the city, or the greater part of it, had remained loyal to the king. During the occupation by the Americans it had given Putnam a good deal of trouble, and if the bluff old soldier had been left to himself he would have ruled these people with a rod of iron.

As it was he treated them with scant courtesy and they bided their time hoping that the day was not far distant when the tables would be turned.

That time had now come.

They could now sit still and see their rebel neighbors mistreated and in many instances they informed on those who had secretly aided the colonies, and homes were invaded and their occupants subjected to all manner of abuse.

Among the younger set of British officers in the city was one destined to play an important part in one of the most tragic dramas of the Revolution.

He was a bright, intelligent young officer, of good family, cool headed and trustful. Even at that time he had risen to high rank and the general officers looked upon him as one sure to become noted before the war closed.

This was John André, a major in the king's forces. He had come over from England full of high hopes and dreamless of the terrible fate that awaited him on these shores.

Handsome, and a great favorite with the fair sex, he was always an honored guest at the many social functions instituted by the officers of the line, and a ball or party without the presence of Major André was not accounted much.

It was indeed the young officer who had stepped between Mistress Beverley and insult on the occasion when she refused to drink to the king.

The story told Captain Lowry by Montressor in Wayne's camp concerning this much talked-of incident was substantially true.

Priscilla had maintained her independence in the matter, and but for Cummings, the young officer who had brought about the incident for a sinister purpose, she would not have been subjected to the criticism that followed her act.

The night after the incident the fair rebel received a call from Major André.

The young officer had gotten himself up in the latest dress and looked spick and span when he reached the door of the young lady's abode.

Priscilla, recalling his interference at the party, wel-

comed him most cordially and he was soon engaged in lively conversation with her.

He again regretted the occurrence which had made her name known throughout the city, saying that this sort of notoriety was never to his liking, when Priscilla hastened to speak:

"I regret it as much as you do, Major André, but, being of the belief which at all times animates my bosom, you must admit that I could do nothing less."

"That is true, Mistress Beverley. Cummings placed you in a close predicament, and there were but two ways out of it—either to sacrifice your politics or drink to the king."

"To the king of England I could not drink," answered Priscilla with some spirit.

"Though a British soldier I do not blame you. We all have opinions of our own and if we are honest in them we should not sell them for a song. You are not alone in your refusal to drink to King George, for I have just heard of a youth who, after singing a rebel song for the delectation of a number of our officers, re-

fused to honor our monarch by drinking his health. You may have heard of the same incident."

Priscilla said she had heard something of the incident, whereupon Major André related the story of Ben Markley's adventure with the tipsy officers, laughing heartily over the affair, and saying that he feared, from the amount of patriotism abroad, they would have a good deal of trouble in reducing the colonists.

"This young man Markley," said André, "is suspected of being a rebel spy right here in the city and his act will only serve to strengthen the suspicion. If he would only get out of the city before he gets into durance he might save himself a good deal of trouble. General Howe has issued stringent orders against such displays of opposition and they are to be enforced to the letter."

"Of course I cannot blame him very much," responded the fair one. "Our people must annoy him a good deal."

"They do. But I have come to mention to you, Mistress Beverley, a little matter which may be for your benefit."

Priscilla was silent.

"Under the circumstances do you not think it best for you to be out of the city?"

"Do you intimate, Major André, that I am to be subjected to any indignities if I choose to remain?"

"To be frank with you these orders of Lord Howe cannot be overlooked. They are to be carried out to the letter as I have already said and ——"

"Pardon me, but are you not ordered to carry them out so far as I am concerned?"

A deep flush overspread the young officer's face and he avoided Priscilla's gaze for a moment.

"You have guessed correctly," said he. "I am ordered by General Howe to arrest you within the next twenty-four hours if you are then to be found in the city."

"I thought so."

"I assure you in advance that the order is a very unpleasant one for me. I dislike it from the bottom of my heart, but a true soldier knows nothing but duty. We have but to obey, you know ——"

"And I would be the last person to persuade you

to do anything else," put in Priscilla gently, yet with a degree of firmness. "I shall not compromise you, major."

"I am glad to hear you say this. You mean that you will not be in Philadelphia at the end of the twenty-four hours?"

"I cannot quite promise you that, but I will not give you the trouble to arrest me."

"I do not quite understand."

"General Howe may change his orders ——"

"The very last thing we are to expect!" cried Major André.

"Do you really think so?" smiled Mistress Beverley.

"Why, my dear young lady, General Howe is one of the firmest soldiers in the world. He has never been known to modify an order and he stands by all he issues."

"Then I suppose my banishment will take place; but first let me try my hand on your general."

"You can do so with my full consent, but I warn you in advance not to attempt to captivate our

general, though he is somewhat susceptible to the charms of beauty."

An hour later the interview came to a close and soon afterward a carriage was seen to stop in front of General Howe's headquarters.

The young lady who was assisted from the vehicle tripped lightly up the steps and the guard admitted her.

A minute later she stood in the presence of the noted British general who commanded in the city.

General Howe welcomed his fair visitor with smiles and led her to a chair when he stepped back and awaited her pleasure.

"General Howe," said Priscilla, looking the handsome officer fairly in the eye, "I understand that your order to the effect that all patriots who have openly expressed themselves against the king, or who have performed acts equally expressive, are to be given twenty-four hours in which to leave the city under penalty of arrest and trial."

"That is true. We must do something in this direction, for you cannot but see that the presence of

such people within our lines militates against our future success."

"Perhaps it does, but ——"

"One moment, Mistress —— You are Mistress Beverley, aren't you?"

Priscilla bowed.

"I thought so."

General Howe stepped to a desk in one corner of the room and took from it a folded paper which he slowly opened.

"This is my general order," said he, coming back to where Priscilla sat. "You may have read it?"

"I have not, but I have been informed of its contents," was the reply.

"Then it is not necessary for me to read it to you. Here also is a list of suspects and among them I find your name, my dear Mistress Beverley."

"My name, General Howe!" archly exclaimed the fair rebel. "Of what am I suspected, pray?"

Howe looked down and stammered.

It was a pointed question and admitted of no equivocation.

"I—I—understand," he blurted, "that you recently refused to drink the king's health."

"That is true."

"You are very frank in admitting the charge."

"I always admit the truth, General Howe."

"Which is not what many do," smiled the British general.

"General Howe, would you drink the health of General Washington?" asked Priscilla suddenly.

"I—I—really that is not a fair question, my dear young lady," replied Howe. "I don't think I will ever be placed in circumstances where I shall have to choose."

"We do not know what may happen for we cannot pierce the veil of the future. I understand that I was placed in a certain dilemma by one of your officers out of a little pique which does not give him a very good reputation as an officer and a gentleman."

General Howe started and looked at the fair girl.

"Why, what is this? A conspiracy, and against one so fair as yourself?"

"It seems so. Lieutenant Cummings of your army

has upon several occasions intruded his society upon me and, not receiving the encouragement he wished, he planned the episode at the party for a little revenge."

"This is, indeed, quite a serious charge against one of my favorite officers."

"You have forced me to make it by the issue of your order."

"Then you mean to tell me that you are not the rebel you are suspected of being—that ——"

"I mean to make no such statement, General Howe," broke in Priscilla. "I am from Boston, as is well known. For the present I am living in Philadelphia and my true sentiments were displayed on the occasion we are now discussing."

"Then you are rebel for certain?"

"I am for the cause represented by Washington. But I have been to a degree the victim of circumstances. The little plot of Lieutenant Cummings succeeded admirably, since I was forced to show my colors at the party where I refused to drink the king's health."

"Surely we do not ask one to uproot in a moment from his or her heart sentiments which have been long forming, but we cannot afford to deal too leniently with our enemies in this city."

"I shall not ask you to," exclaimed Priscilla. "You are at liberty to carry out your orders. I have not called to ask you to modify them. Such is far from my intention, but I thought you should be correctly informed of the circumstances that brought about the predicament in which I was placed—the plot of Lieutenant Cummings of your army."

As she spoke the fair rebel rose gracefully and went to the door. But General Howe reached it slightly in advance of her and laid his hand upon the knob.

"I will see to this," he said, looking down into her flushed face. "You certainly have the courage of your convictions. I am sorry to see one so fair on the side of the American rebels."

"And I, General Howe, am equally sorry to see an officer so intelligent as yourself in favor of crushing out liberty in this country. But I forget that a sol-

dier must know nothing but blind obedience. Your sword belongs to your king, no matter what your real sentiments may be."

"You would convert a British soldier if you were with him very long," laughed General Howe. "I will not forget you, Mistress Beverley, and I take pleasure in saying that the way to my headquarters is always open to you."

Priscilla courtesied at the door which General Howe gallantly held open for her and the next moment her heels were tapping the ground between the house and her carriage.

As she settled back among the leather cushions of the vehicle a smile overspread her face.

What of her diplomatic mission? Had she succeeded in it?

"I must not quit the city yet," she said to herself. "I have much to do here. General Washington must have a friend inside and, as one of our friends is in the shadow of the noose just now, we must play our cards to advantage."

The carriage rattled away.

An hour later a British soldier presented himself at the door of Mistress Beverley's domicile.

In one hand he extended a sealed envelope to the young lady who answered the knocker and, doffing his hat, he withdrew.

Priscilla hastened to the parlor where she broke the seal of the envelope.

Her eyes flashed up with genuine triumph when she had read the brief writing which her action had disclosed.

"It wasn't a visit thrown away after all!" she said half aloud.

Indeed it was not, for she held in her hand a brief order from General Howe exempting her from the operations of his order of arrest and banishment from Philadelphia of all suspected rebels.

No wonder the fair girl could smile to herself.

CHAPTER VIII

DANGER

On the night succeeding Captain Montressor's release from General Wayne's camp a youthful looking person turned the corner of a certain street in Philadelphia and narrowly missed running into the arms of a British guard.

He was nimble of foot, was this person who had his eyes about him and who evidently knew where he was going.

He had proceeded but a short distance from the corner when he ran up an alley and climbed a fence which permitted him to drop into a garden.

Through this he made his way to a house darkly outlined against the sky and was soon inside.

The interior of the place was rather dark like the night outside, but the youthful adventurer soon struck a light with his tinder box and advanced with a pine splinter for a candle.

He found a staircase which he mounted and at last

reached a moderate sized room on the second floor where he extinguished his light.

"So far so good," he said aloud. "I've got so far on the road, and now if they don't fail me ——"

He paused, for sounds of footsteps reached his ears and he placed one hand upon the butt of a weapon which he carried underneath his doublet.

The door opened and he felt the unseen presence of some one.

He did not stir, but kept his hand on the pistol, while he seemed to hold his breath.

At last another sound reached his ears, for some one moved in the apartment and he craned his neck a little as if trying to pierce the gloom ahead.

"No one here," said a voice.

The first comer drew back against the wall for he was very close to the speaker.

"I am here," he said scarcely above a whisper.

There was the sound of a quick start on the part of the unseen one and the pistol was drawn forth and held in front of the first comer's face.

He was ready for whatever might happen and in

that house he evidently believed that anything might transpire.

"You are here?" said a voice in answer to his last words. "Let me know for certain."

"Brandywine!"

There was a low, light chuckle.

"That is it! Where are you?"

"Here!"

Two hands met in the darkness and remained clasped for a spell.

"How long have you been here?"

"But a few moments."

"You ran the gantlet safely, did you?"

"My presence here answers that question."

"To be sure it does, and I'm glad of it. But this way. There is another room where we can have a little light on the subject."

"That will be better. You know the way."

The person who had come in last led the way from the room and the two glided down a musty corridor.

In a few moments a door swung open in the dark-

ness, a threshold was crossed and a little flame leaped over some tow igniting a candle.

"Ben!" exclaimed one of the two.

"Frank!" answered the other.

They had met in the heart of Philadelphia, Ben Markley and Captain Lowry—Ben, the youth who had flouted the ballad of "Mad Anthony Wayne" into the faces of the red-coated officers and Frank, the favorite young captain belonging to Mad Anthony's Legion, serving with the Boys of Liberty, Captain Pierce.

"We won't talk long," said Ben Markley, as he stuck the candle into an old-fashioned holder on the table. "We want action just now."

"What is the news?"

"Our friend is in the very shadow of the gallows. Tom is in prison and has been condemned."

"They've tried him, then?"

"Oh, it was hardly a trial. He was condemned from the moment that rascally recruit from Long Island recognized him."

"It was most unfortunate. Howe does not seem to

have any heart in him at all. He has approved of the sentence ——"

"Then Montressor ——"

"What about Montressor?" broke in Ben Markley. "I know something of a Captain Montressor of the king's forces and he is very active in having Tom Hapgood swing."

"The scoundrel!" cried Frank Lowry. "Why, I liberated that same fellow from captivity at the risk of my own life under promise that he would effect our friend's release."

"Which goes to show that these English have very little of the stuff we Americans call honor."

Frank said nothing in reply to this.

He recalled his interview with Captain Lloyd Montressor and the young Britisher's oath still sounded in his ears.

Then the stern words of General Wayne rang in his ears as well:

"If Tom Hapgood or Montressor is not in my camp within forty-eight hours I shall hold you responsible."

And Mad Anthony would do this.

"Fool I was to trust that redcoat!" cried Frank at last. "I shall never trust another. But he swore upon the honor of his house and the sacred memory of his mother ——"

"He may have intended well," put in Ben. "But you see Tom is so closely guarded that it seems impossible to get at him. I managed to send him a mysterious message which he may be able to study out by himself. That is about all we've been able to do. We of the True Hearts of Liberty are doing all for the cause we can in the city, but we are hampered by the watchfulness of the foe. General Howe is ever on the alert and Cornwallis ably seconds him in this respect. From what I have heard of this young Captain Montressor he is accounted a man of his word but one cannot always make his word good, you know."

"That is true. But he may have failed to carry out his pledge and let us have a better opinion of the young heir of Seavoy until we know more."

For half an hour the two youths talked in the

flickering light of the candle, and then it was extinguished and they glided from the old place.

Frank had come to Philadelphia without orders, but not without the knowledge of Mad Anthony who wanted, above all things, to effect the release of Tom Hapgood, his young spy.

Lowry knew the city fairly well for he had been stationed in it during the interval between Trenton and the evacuation by the Americans. He was capable of making his way to almost any point after dark, therefore the journey to the old house in which he encountered Ben Markley had not been attended with incident.

The youths made their way half-way across the city and brought up in front of a large residence.

"That's the place," said Ben. "Now I will leave you."

Ben darted away leaving Frank in front of the house and in a few moments the young provincial mounted the broad steps.

A light was visible beyond the shutters on one side of the ample front and in response to his

ring the door opened and a servant made her appearance.

She started back at sight of the young patriot who was attired in citizen's clothes, and looked searchingly into his face.

Frank mentioned the name of Mistress Beverley whom he said he wished to see.

"She is not in, sir," haughtily replied the maid.

"She is out at this hour?"

"As you please, sir. Mistress Beverley is not a person to have her comings and goings questioned."

Frank bit his lips under this reproof.

"Can you tell me when she will return?"

"That I cannot as she never lets me know."

"If you will permit I will step inside and wait a while for Mistress Beverley."

"That, sir, I cannot consent to as some one is waiting for her in the parlor."

Just then a voice pitched in a feminine key called out:

"Who has called to see Mistress Priscilla, pray, Ruth?"

"That I cannot tell you as he has not given his name."

In another moment there were sounds of footsteps in the hallway and Frank saw an elegantly dressed young lady behind the maid.

"Mistress Beverley is not at home as the maid has informed you," said this person, as she advanced toward the door. "So if you wish to see her at once you will be disappointed. However, I am expecting her home at any moment."

"She left orders, Miss, not to let strange people in during her absence," pouted the maid who evidently did not have the best opinion of Captain Lowry.

"I will take the responsibility," was the reply. "If the gentleman will step this way he may wait a while for Mistress Beverley."

As this was just what the young provincial wanted he was not slow to accept the invitation and in another second he found himself in the parlor facing the fair young woman who had interceded in his behalf.

"You are Mistress Ferguson, are you not?" asked

Frank, as he studied for a moment the face before him.

"I am Mistress Bess Ferguson," was the reply. "I dropped in a few moments ago to see Mistress Beverley on a mission of some importance, but, as she was out, I concluded to sit a while for her."

Frank looked again at the old Quaker-Tory's niece and admitted to himself that hers was an enchanting style of beauty.

In person Mistress Bess was inclined to good stature and her rich auburn locks falling over her ample shoulders added to her attractiveness. Moreover her eyes were large and sparkling and Frank could not but notice the geniality that cropped out in her countenance. She had the reputation of being one of the younger belles of the Quaker City and rumor gave her lovers by the score.

Frank had already heard that her hand was sought in marriage by General Huston of the king's army, and while he looked into the handsome face before him he felt that the young officer would gain a prize when he led Mistress Bess to the altar.

As yet he had not proclaimed his identity to the fair Quaker maid, but he fancied that, as she was Priscilla's friend and confidante, she might easily guess it.

"Would you like a little music?" asked the young lady, suddenly rising and sweeping in her rich skirts across the room.

"If you please," answered Frank, for Mistress Bess had already seated herself at the harpsichord and her light fingers were strumming the ivory keys.

"What shall it be?" she asked with a toss of the head as she looked over her shoulder at the young patriot.

"Whatever you wish to play. I shall be satisfied," and Frank fell to gazing at the speaker.

For a moment Mistress Ferguson continued to dally with the keys, then she broke into the musical score of a ballad just then popular among the Americans and a favorite in all their camps—"Washington's March to Trenton."

Captain Frank started at the first note for it was the last thing he had expected to hear in Philadelphia.

He could scarcely believe his ears as the music swept on and on, now rising and now sinking as the fair player described the battle of Trenton. Frank Lowry sat entranced and speechless.

The last stanza was reached at last, the last note floated through his brain to die away as it were among the ice-locked streams of Jersey, for she had carried him back to the crossing of the Delaware, the charge through the streets of Trenton and the final rout of the Hessians.

With fire in her fine eyes Mistress Bess turned triumphantly upon the single spectator.

Her look said plainly: "Well, how did you like it?"

"You must have taken me for a rebel," smiled Captain Lowry, pretending surprise, not to say chagrin.

A smile broadened on the face before him.

"And, pray, who would come to see Mistress Beverley at this hour but a rebel?" she exclaimed. "You said you would be satisfied with anything I might play and I judged that what you have just heard would not prove an insult."

"Then you ——"

"Come, let us know one another better," cried Mistress Bess, crossing the room. "You have come into the city from without to see Mistress Priscilla and since you have guessed my name so well let me say that you are Captain Lowry, of Wayne's Legion."

Frank started at hearing his name and rank spoken so boldly in that place.

"And what if you should be correct?" he said. "If I am the person you have named I must be in the presence of a friend."

"You are nowhere else. Because I inhabit the home of the greatest Tory in Philadelphia, it is no sign that I bow at the feet of the tyrant king."

Bess Ferguson spoke with open animation.

Her eyes glowed as she did so and Frank, advancing to the instrument, grasped her hand.

"Allow me to congratulate you on the song," he exclaimed. "And to wish success to our cause in North America."

"Our cause?" she exclaimed. "Why, sir, don't you know that I am a Ferguson?"

"A Ferguson indeed, but all Fergusons are not for the king."

She laughed and for a moment turned to the harpsichord, slipping her fingers along the keys, but she suddenly stopped:

"Mistress Priscilla has arrived. I hear the wheels of the carriage in the street."

"Thank fortune!"

There came a quick ring in the hall and the maid tripped to the door.

In another moment Mistress Bess Ferguson seized Frank's arm and pulled him backward.

"It is not Priscilla!" she cried. "I recognize the voice at the door. It is the voice of Major John André of the British army!"

The young soldier of Mad Anthony's Legion seemed to become a statue in marble in the middle of the room.

CHAPTER IX

IN THE ENEMY'S CAMP

WHILE he had a good opinion of the tact and courage of Mistress Ferguson Frank did not care to encounter Major André even in her presence.

The girl might be shrewd enough, but he had come to the city upon a dangerous errand which was no less than a self-imposed expedition for the release of Tom Hapgood, and this British major might spoil the whole thing.

Therefore, when he was told by Mistress Bess that the man at the door was André and not Priscilla, he involuntarily shrank back. He wanted to meet no one but the person whom he had come to see, Priscilla herself.

In a moment, after waving Frank toward the door of another apartment, Bess Ferguson ran into the hall and called to the maid:

"Say to the gentleman that Mistress Beverley is not in."

"Not in at this hour?" exclaimed the person at

the portal. "I did not know she was in the habit of making such late calls."

"She did not inform me as to her return," the maid said. "I cannot, therefore, tell you when you may have the pleasure of seeing her."

"But the lady who just spoke? Was it not her friend, Mistress Ferguson?"

"Really, sir ——"

"Come, girl," cried the soldier. "You have been trained very well, no doubt, but I have certainly recognized the voice in the parlor."

"I am Mistress Ferguson," was the retort, and Bess stepped into the hall. "Ah, it is Major André, I see! What is it, major?"

The handsome young officer, taken a little aback by the sudden appearance of Mistress Bess, did not reply for a moment, but his presence confirmed her pretended discovery.

"I have called to see Mistress Beverley," he said, coming to his own rescue. "I was passing and, seeing a light in the house, I thought I would not be overstepping the rules of decorum ——"

"Certainly not if Mistress Beverley happened to be at home. I am waiting for her myself."

Standing in a room adjoining the parlor, Captain Lowry heard all this.

He had heard before of this Major André over whose head was impending a terrible fate; he had formed a good opinion of his generosity and chivalry, and he felt like thanking him for coming to Priscilla's rescue when she refused to drink to the king.

But he thought that the hour had not arrived for such action, therefore he remained where he was, content to entrust all diplomacy to Mistress Bess.

"Is it very important, Major André?" asked the young girl.

"Somewhat," was the answer. "She has been taken off General Howe's list of suspects ——"

"A fact with which she is already familiar."

"Then I am a poor news bearer," smiled André. "That is all, I believe. But hold! Mistress Ferguson. What is this I hear of your change of heart, if not of name?"

Bess flushed to the temples.

"My change of name, sir?" she cried. "Is it abroad so soon?"

"Indeed, it is the talk of the city."

"Then I am one of the favored ones, I suppose. Really, Major André" (Bess knew him very well), "I think I am to be congratulated, don't you?"

"That is true and I extend my well wishes. General Huston is a good soldier, but 'tis said you named a day that may in the course of events be far away, though we hope not."

"Far away, indeed?" cried Bess. "I simply promised to become his bride when King George proclaimed the colonies free and independent."

"Were you in earnest, Mistress Bess?"

"Never more so in all my life, I assure you."

"And the general? What did he say?"

"What could he say? It takes two to make a bargain, you know, and as I am the person most interested, I named my part of it."

"Do you really think, Mistress Bess, that we shall ever be humiliated by reading a proclamation of that sort?"

"You surely will unless you make better headway against the rebels than you have of late."

"I fancy we have done fairly well. We have possession of their congress city: we are snugly situated in Philadelphia and we have just chastised them on the Brandywine."

"All of which in your mind no doubt compensates for Trenton and Princeton?"

Major John André winced at this.

"Those were surprises," he said. "We were not prepared for the rebel Washington. Who would have thought that a man would attempt to cross a half-frozen river with a lot of half-clad and half-starved men and falling upon our posts?"

"General Washington!"

"A rebel's idea! It was that or final capture. These successes are but temporary. They cannot be of much benefit to the rebel cause, and the day of surprises is over. But as Mistress Beverley is not here I shall move on."

"Thank fortune," thought Frank in his prison. "He is going and I shall be rid of him."

He heard Major André bid Mistress Ferguson good-night and soon after the door had closed she came into the room.

"I've gotten rid of my caller," she laughed as she closed the inner portal. "I have a strong feeling of respect for Major André. He is not like the usual run of British officers, for the chivalry he brought from England he retains under all circumstances. There is a great future ahead for that brilliant foe if others will let him alone. You did not know, perhaps, that he is a poet as well as a soldier?"

"I did not," said Frank.

"He has written some extremely fine things in verse. He always delights to write in our verse-books, and it is quite a fad here now among young ladies to have him dedicate their albums."

"I can respect an enemy like that."

"We all like him. This war would be stripped of much of its brutality if Major André had the directing of affairs."

Captain Lowry sought to shift the subject to another peg to which Mistress Bess consented, and they

were discussing British rule in the city when carriage wheels again reached their ears and with a cry of "Priscilla at last!" Bess sprang up and bounded into the hall.

Sure enough this time Captain Lowry heard the voice of another young lady in the hall and in a moment he stood before her.

"Welcome to Philadelphia, Captain Lowry!" cried Priscilla, extending her hand. "I am pleased to see you, but, truth to tell, I wish time and place were different."

"We must take such things as they come," replied Frank. "I have but just reached the city and, while I am not here on a spy's mission, it might not go well with me were I to be discovered by the enemy."

"That it would not. I have just returned from the lower town. I find things there in a turmoil," and Priscilla looked at Bess. "We have friends there who are in trouble."

"In trouble, Priscilla?" cried Mistress Ferguson. "In what way, pray?"

"They have ferreted out the True Hearts."

"It cannot be!"

"It seems that the Order has been betrayed by some one. I was told by a young officer of the Royal Greens that several of our friends are now under arrest and that they hope to get the remainder by morning."

"And is that what detained you?"

"In a measure, yes. I was solicitous, you know, and, by stopping where I might pick up a little additional news, I happened to delay my home-coming."

"Betrayed? All to be taken before morning?" Bess was heard to ejaculate scarcely above her breath. "It is bad enough, but it might be worse."

"I don't see how," said Priscilla.

"We might be arrested, too."

"Indeed that might put a soberer face upon affairs; but let us consider that it is decidedly bad enough. But, Captain Lowry, what is your mission to Philadelphia?"

"I am here on account of a red-coated prisoner breaking his pledged word."

"Who did that?"

"Captain Lloyd Montressor."

"I have met him," said Priscilla. "He seemed to me the beau ideal of a British gentleman and the last man whom I would accuse of such a thing as that."

"We had him prisoner in our camp. He promised to effect the release of Tom Hapgood of the Legion if we let him go, and I took upon myself the responsibility and he was set free. Now I will be held severely responsible should neither he nor Tom Hapgood appear in Wayne's camp within a given time."

"And the penalty?"

"That lies with Mad Anthony," was the reply. "He did not take kindly to my foolish assumption of authority, and I must expect the worst should my plans fail."

"If it lies with Captain Montressor there is hope yet," Bess exclaimed. "He prides himself upon his blue-blooded ancestry and I have heard him say that one drop of Montressor blood is worth a river of royal gore."

"I doubt not he is chivalrous, but remember he made his promise to a rebel."

"That will cut no figure as against his honor," was the rejoinder. "Captain Montressor is true to his pledge and I am sure something has happened to defeat his plans."

"Let us hope that he will yet carry them out," said Frank. "Mistress Priscilla, I thank you in the name of General Wayne for the information recently sent in through Master Bowers."

"I know no Master Bowers," cried Priscilla with a hurried glance at Bess. "I never entrusted anything to a man of that name."

"At least he called himself such."

"It is news to me," the fair rebel replied. "So General Wayne received a message purporting to come from me through one Master Bowers. It is a mystery."

"Very well; we will let it remain one. Now what is to be done in Tom's case?"

"What can be done?" exclaimed Priscilla. "With our friends of the True Hearts suspected and some of them already under arrest, the chances for saving him look very dark."

"They seem to form a cloud without a silver lining."

"But we need not despair," put in Mistress Ferguson. "My father's brother, while he is for the king, sometimes strangely leans toward the provincials."

"But we cannot hope for anything from that source, Bess."

"I do not know. I shall hold an interview with him, for you know he is intimate with General Howe and quite familiar with my Lord Cornwallis and he can, if he will, put in a word for the prisoner."

"If our hopes depend on Thomas Ferguson helping us we might as well prepare for the worst," Frank said with some bitterness. "We know of your uncle, Mistress Bess."

"And he is probably as black as he has been painted," added that young lady without taking offense. "You see that as I am to become the wife of General Huston ——"

"Why not get him interested in Master Hapgood?"

"What! interest General Huston in a rebel who is

under sentence of death? He would as soon be expected to spare a serpent that coiled round his leg. My future lord and master is not at all tender-hearted; but he has a few commendable traits, among which is the one of implicit obedience to his king. However, I might try, but I imagine the first thing he would ask of me for any favor from him would be another date for our marriage."

"But you've settled that, Bess!" cried Priscilla.

"So I have, and he doesn't fancy the settlement," laughed the Quaker-Tory's niece.

The hour had now waxed so late that Frank resolved to leave, saying that he hoped to run across Captain Montressor when he would remind him of his promise, and the two young ladies reluctantly bade him good-night.

The young patriot once more found himself upon the streets of Philadelphia.

The winds of the autumn night, blowing up from the river, fanned his cheeks.

He was in the stronghold of the enemy.

The sentries called out the hour as he passed along,

adding that all was well when the shadow of battle hovered over everything.

Frank felt hungry as his journey had sharpened his appetite and he stopped at a small establishment whose door opened upon the sidewalk.

Refreshments were being served to several British officers of inferior rank and Frank, feeling that he could appease his appetite without danger of detection, entered and took a seat at one of the tables.

As the waiter approached him he heard a voice behind him and glancing over his shoulder he saw that the speaker was the very man he wanted to see—Captain Montressor, his late prisoner.

But he knew better than to let himself be recognized there, for, as yet, his identity had not been discovered.

CHAPTER X

THE COUNCIL OF WAR

LEAVING the city in the hands of the enemy for a time let us repair to the camp of the American army.

Washington, whose vigilance had been sleepless, was planning to show the British that the lion was not asleep.

In a little room some miles from the outskirts of Philadelphia stood the commander-in-chief looking down upon a roughly drawn military map on the table.

He was quite alone, but not for long.

He might have heard the guard's challenge and the reply, for the door opened and a young officer stood saluting in the doorway.

"Welcome, Captain Pierce," cried Washington, as he looked up and returned the salute. "How are the Boys of Liberty?"

"Eager and ready to meet the enemy again," was the prompt reply.

"Ah! I knew that without the asking. I wanted to show you some lines on this map. Come nearer, captain."

Benjamin drew nearer, feeling as he always did, a certain awe when in the presence of Washington.

The finger of the great man moved slowly over the map on the table and Benjamin followed it closely.

"You are familiar with the ground, I am told," pursued Washington. "You see this line here? Is it correct in its windings?"

The captain of the Boys of Liberty leaned over the map and inspected it closely for a few seconds.

"It should curve here," he said, indicating with his finger. "It should pass a little to the left of the Chew House, while I see that it hits the house exactly."

"I notice," answered Washington.

"It runs in this direction for a mile or more—an old road, you know, Your Excellency, and here it terminates at the foot of the hills. It is a good road and one easily followed."

"Now we will look at this line," and Washington

turned the map half-way round. "The arrows point rather northeastward. Is that correct, sir?"

"Substantially so. They seem to point in direction of the forks in the Old Line Road."

"That is true. What should be here where my finger is? The person who drew this map seemed undecided."

Benjamin bent over the great hand of Washington and looked at the map again.

"Lutan's Mill should be there," he said.

"That is the place lacking," smiled the chief. "Do you consider this a faithful map, Captain Pierce?"

"It is well drawn with the exceptions I have pointed out."

"And you would rely upon it in case of need?"

"I know of no better map, Your Excellency."

"What does it represent?"

"Germantown and its surroundings."

Washington smiled, but did not speak.

"Captain," said he a moment later, "in what condition are the Boys of Liberty?"

"They are in prime condition for an advance movement. They have fully recovered from the hot hour at Brandywine."

"Ah! that was a fight," and the eyes of the chief seemed to glow at the recollection. "We might have fared better there, but for one or two little circumstances. We will retrieve all this in the future. The enemy is holding Philadelphia and he is secure in his own estimation. That is all, Captain Pierce. You will be ready to march upon notice. I hope we will soon be able to show our faces once more to the enemy, and to see his back."

Seeing that the interview was over, Benjamin again saluted and withdrew, followed by a benign smile from his chief.

"Something's stirring," said Benjamin to himself when he found the open air. "Washington is not going to lie idle long. The lion of liberty is getting ready for a spring and I hope he will throw the Legion in the van."

If the guiding spirit of the Revolution was once more alone it was not for long.

Footsteps were soon heard outside the little house and the door opened.

The familiar figure of Mad Anthony Wayne stood on the threshold and Washington greeted him with a glow in his deep eyes.

General Wayne came in and said a few words to which the commander-in-chief bowed and looked down at the map.

Presently the door opened again and Knox and Greene entered side by side.

Then came a dashing looking officer with a foreign air. He looked dandified with his darkish mustaches and sallow features, but he was decidedly handsome.

This was the Count Pulaski, the Pole, the leader of Washington's horsemen and the hero of more than one battle.

The count bowed to all present and drew to one side of the room as if he did not care to intrude his personality upon the council of war.

Washington looked at the generals when they had all assembled and drew the map closer to him.

"I have just had the map verified," he said in his

well-known voice. "It has been corrected in one or two particulars and I believe it is now all that we can expect."

"May I ask who corrected it?" quietly asked Knox, under whose supervision the chart had been made.

"Captain Pierce of the Boys of Liberty corrected it and he is familiar with the ground."

General Wayne bowed at this.

"I can endorse Captain Pierce," said he. "He and his boys did excellent work at Brandywine."

"And at Trenton as well," replied Knox, "for I saw them there myself. I accept the corrections as made by Captain Pierce, Your Excellency."

Washington seemed pleased at this confidence placed in the young provincial captain and all drew closer to the table.

"Gentlemen," said the commander-in-chief, "the time has come for action. The enemy is feeling secure in and around Germantown. As learned from the best sources, the situation resolves itself into this: We have Knyphausen in command on the

left. He has seven British and three Hessian battalions and the mounted and dismounted chasseurs. General Grant is on the right with six battalions of British troops and two squadrons of dragoons. There is no distinct centre, gentlemen."

General Greene raised his hand a little, attracting Washington's attention.

"What is it, General Greene?"

"If the enemy has no distinct centre where is General Howe?"

"I should have said that, other than the local street crossings, there is no centre. General Howe has his headquarters about half a mile south of a spot which is here indicated," and Washington laid his index finger on the map.

Then rapidly but with great clearness the commander-in-chief proceeded to point out the different bodies of the enemy as shown on the parchment, explaining everything as he went on. The generals listened closely and all must have been astonished at the information collected by Washington.

He seemed to know all about the British army

lying at Germantown, a straggling village about six miles from old Philadelphia, but now a part of it.

He seemed to know the location of every regiment in the British army, and explained matters with such clearness that his generals did not have to ask a question.

Having sketched the enemy's position Washington at last began to map out the next campaign.

Again he was clear and incisive.

He told his generals that the time for inaction had passed.

They were to throw themselves upon the British at Germantown and, defeating them, recover Philadelphia.

It was an idea that did credit to the great generalship of Washington.

Nothing was more plausible.

The Americans were still smarting over the defeat at Brandywine, and Lafayette was nursing the wound received there and not yet able to take the field.

Greene was eager to do his part, and the light that

shone in Mad Anthony's eyes as Washington proceeded boded evil for the red-coated enemy.

As for the quiet Knox, he listened, saying nothing, but he could be depended on when the hour came.

Pulaski, wrapped in his cloak, nodded approval now and then as he twisted his mustache, and yearned for a dash at the enemy, whom he hated with all the power of one who had fled from the oppression of Russia to fight in the ranks of liberty.

It was a scene fit for the brush of a great artist.

For ten minutes Washington talked steadily, then, when he ceased, every head nodded approval.

Nothing could supplement the plan of campaign as he had outlined it.

"What think you, General Greene?" asked Washington, turning to the blacksmith hero.

"Your plan meets with my unqualified approval."

"And you, General Knox?"

"I have no suggestions, for none are needed."

"What think you, General Wayne?"

"It is perfect. We shall win! You shall have a good report from the Legion."

Washington now turned to Count Pulaski.

The silent Pole lifted his head at sound of Washington's voice.

"It eeze vell," he said with his foreign accent. "Ze enemy sall feel ze swords of my dragoons in zere backs. It shall be zis! and zis! and zis!" And the Pole struck out with his right arm as if he were dealing an enemy severe blows with the sabre.

A smile passed over the faces of the generals, but the features of Washington did not relax.

"Now that we know what is to be done you will retire, gentlemen," he said. "When the advance is at hand you will know your places. I shall expect a good report from each of you."

One by one the officers filed from the council room until at last the Hope of America was left alone.

Casimir Pulaski sidled up to General Wayne and looked up into his face.

"He eeze great!" said the Pole enthusiastically.

"He is a god!" cried the impulsive Wayne. "He was created to plant the tree of freedom in North America and all the powers of the infernal regions

aided by King George cannot uproot it! We shall have some hot work at Germantown, count. It will be vengeance for the Brandywine."

The Pole twisted his mustache savagely and laughed.

"He has put the Legion in the front," continued Wayne. "It is just where I wanted. I want to crush those British squadrons. We will trample them in the dust, and don't spare them when you find yourself in their midst, count. Remember Paoli!"

Wayne's teeth seemed to gnash as he mentioned that one word which already had sunk deep into his soul, for the night surprise at Paoli a few weeks before when the British general Grey had fallen by night upon Wayne's camp was the one thing that now embittered the great soldier's life.

And he hoped for vengeance. He longed for the day when he could pay them back for Paoli, when he could charge the enemy and drive the bayonet into British bosoms.

Wayne and Pulaski walked to their quarters together.

The cause of liberty had made them fast friends.

One had been born on the western continent, the other in far-away Poland, whose lamentable story nestled in every liberty-loving heart.

At the door of Wayne's quarters they stopped and the Pole threw his arms about Mad Anthony's neck.

He said nothing, but the embrace told more than words could have done.

When he released Wayne there were tears in the American's eyes and he laid his hand on Pulaski's arm.

"I know, count, I know," he said. "After we are free, if you go home, you can take Anthony Wayne along for a spell. We will free Poland or know why not."

A few yards distant Captain Pierce lay awake in his own little quarters.

"We are to have another battle," he said to himself. "We are to surprise the redcoats again. But where are Frank and Tom? It will be no fight at all if they are not with us in the breach."

And, thinking thus, he finally fell asleep, the sleep of a soldier of fortune and a hero of liberty.

CHAPTER XI

WHEN BLADES ARE DRAWN

With the welfare of Tom Hapgood uppermost in his mind Captain Lowry was gratified to see Montressor, the young Englishman, in the eating-house.

He dared not proclaim his identity in that place, and it was with the greatest impatience that he waited for the officer to finish his meal.

But Montressor gave no signs of soon quitting the café, and Frank watched him furtively and tried to catch the conversation passing between him and his comrades.

Suddenly, to young Lowry's astonishment, the lie was passed, and Montressor and another sprang to their feet and stood gazing at each other like gladiators.

The British captain's antagonist was his senior by some years, but the scion of the house of Seavoy stood his ground like a veteran and threw back the lie squarely into the other's face.

The sudden break in the quietude of the place put

every one on the alert, and in another moment half the spectators were on their feet.

"It is false!" cried young Montressor, as he laid his hand on his sword. "I am not a traitor to the king. The man who says so must eat his words."

"But for your youth, young fellow, I would spit you as we spit pigs at home," was the retort, and the older officer laughed derisively, which only irritated the youth the more. "I have respect for your parents, who probably purchased you a commission in the army in hopes of getting you killed off in this blarsted land of Yankees and rebels. But for this I would promptly resent the insult, but will let the rebels finish you if you are bold enough to show them your face, which I very much doubt."

There was a general laugh at this, at young Montressor's expense, and the blade of the youth leaped from its scabbard.

"Stand!" he shouted to his enemy. "I will waive the question of age and let you spill some Seavoy blood if you can. You ran at Brandywine, as the whole army knows—showed your back to the rebels,

and but for your fleetness some of Count Pulaski's riders would have overtaken you."

"It is false!"

The face of the speaker was crimson, and all saw that the duel would not be long delayed.

The other, a certain Major Calhutton, of Cornwallis' command, let out a mad curse and drew his blade as Montressor placed himself in position of attack.

Tables were thrown back and chairs pushed in every direction and everybody awaited the first lunge.

As for Frank Lowry, he was one of the most interested spectators in the room, and stepped forward to a spot where he could watch everything.

He had resolved that young Montressor, his late prisoner, should not come out second best if he could prevent, for the young soldier's safety was of the greatest importance to both himself and Tom Hapgood just then.

He saw that Calhutton was the better swordsman, for he had age and experience in his favor, and his look told Frank that he intended to disable Montressor, if not to kill him.

This desperate resolve probably arose from the wine the elder officer had been drinking; for when wine is in, judgment is out, and, knowing this from what he had already seen during his service in the army, Captain Lowry edged his way a little closer.

It did not take long to bring the enemies to the fighting point, for all at once Calhutton threw a low epithet into Montressor's face for the purpose of bringing on a lunge and the swords met in mid-air.

The first pass proved to Frank that the younger soldier was no expert with the blade, for Calhutton parried the thrust with ease and, as was seen by all, held the life of the young officer at the point of his weapon.

The sympathies of the crowd were with Montressor, but Calhutton had his friends and it was easily seen that the latter were the better swordsmen.

Lowry held his breath as thrust, parry and lunge were given in rapid succession, the crowd applauding nearly every act of the duellists, and his heart went into his throat as young Montressor stood at Calhutton's mercy.

There was no real mercy in the old swordsman's eyes.

He probably wanted more fame as a duellist, for he knit his lips and gripped his blade the firmer for the death-blow.

Montressor had uncovered his breast by a false thrust and all who saw it held their breath.

The crisis in the fight had come.

Lowry threw out his hands and swept the two spectators in his front aside.

In another second he was in front of Montressor and the next he had wrenched the blade from his hand and confronted Calhutton with all the coolness of one who has a just cause.

A shout went up from the crowd.

Montressor, not understanding the quick move of young Lowry, looked at him with astonishment.

Calhutton fell back a pace and dropped his sword for a moment.

"I am not fighting you!" he cried, looking at Frank. "I haven't summoned you here."

"That is true, but you shall not murder a boy."

"Pray, what are you?"

"Never mind that!"

Then there was a cry of recognition from young Montressor's lips.

He knew Frank and doubtless the scene in Wayne's camp had risen before his eyes.

"Here!" he exclaimed, as he attempted to recover his sword. "Give me my blade and let me have it out with this coward."

But Frank held firmly to the hilt of the weapon and drew away from the young officer.

There was rising turmoil everywhere in the room, for the friends of the first parties were taking sides and all saw that in a short time the whole house would be a battle-ground.

But Major Calhutton was not to be deprived of his prey, for his blood was hot and he did not want to bear the name of coward which Montressor had dinned in his ears.

"Get out of the way, interloper!" he cried to Lowry. "This is not your fight. It is mine and I intend to spit the young pigeon in approved style."

"After me," was the response, as Frank met the look with irritating calmness.

"After you? Never! The young redcoat first! You must be a country bumpkin and I don't fight the scum of the byways."

But Frank made a quick pass which put Calhutton on his guard and the next moment the fun was fast and furious.

Lowry had taken a few lessons in swordsmanship since entering the army and Count Pulaski had given him a few points in the art of self-defense as well as attack, and Calhutton ground his teeth when he discovered that he had no mean antagonist to deal with.

The turmoil ceased and even Montressor fell back and with bated breath watched the swift movements of his ally.

"Who is the fellow?" went from lip to lip. "He knows a few points in the game and, by my life! he will presently show Calhutton that a boy is not to be despised."

Frank heard this, but did not notice.

He saw that he had for an enemy a man of ex-

perience in the art of duelling and that if he would come off best he must watch every movement as well as keep out of the way of the Britisher's blade.

Suddenly, and sooner than he had hoped, his opportunity came.

By a dextrous play he threw the major off his guard and for a flash his breast was uncovered.

Lowry's sword rose to the emergency at once.

He threw his active body forward while at the same time he thrust out keenly and with vengeance, and his blade went slipping underneath Calhutton's right arm and the Englishman's sword fell ringing to the hard floor.

A cry went up from Calhutton's friends as that worthy fell staggering back and Lowry stepped aside.

He still held to Montressor's sword, for he did not know what another minute would bring forth.

The hot fight had nearly winded him and he was glad when he felt young Montressor's hand on his arm, and he was pushed aside into a group of the youth's friends.

"You must get away from here," said several voices

in unison. "You have wounded the old lion to the death and he is popular in certain quarters."

Lowry tried to get a glimpse of the blanched face lying near the floor surrounded by others, but half a dozen officers stepped between and shut off his view.

"Come," whispered Montressor at his ear. "'Tis death for you to remain!" and Frank was almost dragged from the place by his friend and the two reached the open air together.

They heard increasing turmoil behind them, loud voices and shouts as the two factions seemed to be getting ready for a general battle.

"In heaven's name what brought you into this hornet's nest?" queried Montressor when he had conducted Lowry some distance from the scene of the duel. "Don't you know that this is the king's city?"

"I know that you hold it for the present," was the reply. "But I trust it is but for a spell."

"We'll determine that later on. You are in the shadow of death. Tell me what brought you hither. Did Mad Anthony send you?"

"No; I came on my own account. I want to see whether a Montressor is as good as his word."

"Ah! I remember!" cried the young Britisher. "You think me false, I see. I pledged you my word and honor——"

"You did," interrupted Frank. "You gave me the sacred word of a Montressor, saying that for the service I rendered in the provincial camp you would rescue my friend Tom Hapgood."

"I gave my word."

"But what have you done? Nothing!"

Lowry's voice was full of bitterness.

Montressor turned his head away for a moment, but soon looked Frank squarely in the face.

"You should have waited."

"How long? You do not know that General Wayne has made me hostage, that unless Tom is back within a certain time, or if you do not report, I shall be brought up for trial and dismissed the army, if nothing worse."

"Did he say that?"

"It is the ultimatum of Mad Anthony, my com-

mander. I trusted you, Captain Montressor. I gave you your freedom at the risk of my own honor. I accepted your pledged word ——"

"Which I have not broken, sir," and the hand of Montressor fell again upon Lowry's arm. "I can look you in the face and say that the honor of Montressor is still unsullied. Gods! how you fought to-night. Who taught you that thrust which won the battle?"

"Count Casimir Pulaski, of Washington's army."

"Ah, the fighting Pole!" cried Montressor. "We have heard of him. He is a whirlwind in battle."

"And a swordsman of two continents. But come back to the other matter."

"I will. Your friend Tom Hapgood is free!"

"Free!" cried Frank, stepping back and looking incredulously into the young Briton's face.

"He is free!"

"Impossible!"

"To-morrow when they open the door to lead him out they will find but a dummy in his prison."

The look of unbelief lingered on Lowry's face.

"Who did it?" he asked.

"Ask not, but know that Montressor has kept his word."

The boys stood in the shadow of a tall wooden building and Frank suddenly put out his hand.

It was cordially grasped by the other and they remained for half a second looking into each other's faces in silence.

"You can go back to the Legion and fight again," said Montressor, the first to speak. "You will have Tom Hapgood at your side and they say he is a furious foe. You must go now, for danger lurks for you in every shadow that falls to-night in the Quaker City. We are friends, not foes, Captain Lowry. You can tell your Mad Anthony that Captain Montressor has redeemed himself. And should we ever meet on the field of battle know that my sword—the one you fought with for me this night—shall never seek your heart."

The chivalry of his young foe touched Frank to the quick.

He would have replied in like strain, but for a sudden push on Montressor's part.

"The night patrol!" was shouted in his ear. "This way! Quick! They may be looking for you."

Frank was hurried into a darker section of the street, thrust into an open doorway, his hand was grasped in farewell, and Montressor was gone.

CHAPTER XII

MASTER HAPGOOD'S STORY

EARLY the following morning Captain Benjamin Pierce of the Boys of Liberty was startled to find facing him Tom Hapgood, whose impending fate was known to nearly the whole army.

"Where did you come from?" cried Benjamin. "You come back like one long dead. The last we heard of you you were in the shadow of the noose in Philadelphia ——"

"But you see my neck is still intact," and Tom put up his hand and opened his collar. "I've had a narrow escape, I guess, and but for some one whom I did not get to thank I wouldn't be here at this moment congratulating myself on my freedom."

"Some friend whom you did not get to see, you say?"

"That's it exactly. I had been sentenced without trial, for they didn't intend to take any chances with me and I knew that if I were in durance at sunrise

this morning I would be marched out between files of redcoats and hanged in the most approved manner."

"Well?"

"Last night after midnight I heard some one talking with my guard. The big guard was a sort of clever fellow who was tired of the war and who wants to get home as soon as possible. I listened of course and managed to overhear some words that sent my heart up into my throat. Presently the conversation ceased and some one went away. I went back to the poor cot they had furnished me, but for my life I could not sleep. I lay awake counting the moments, as it were, and hearing an old clock which was not far off striking the hour. I felt that it was cutting an hour out of my life, and when the sound of the last stroke died away I went to the door."

"To talk with the guard?"

"Yes. He often stopped there and looking through the little round hole cut in one of the panels would stand and tell me about his family across the water. We became pretty well acquainted

and he wasn't the worst fellow in the world. I hope Jack Munroe will live to get back to England.

"Well, I finally went back to my cot and fell asleep. The first thing I knew I was pulled out upon the floor and told to change clothes. The man who spoke to me had a part of his face masked and he threw upon the cot a bundle of clothes which he bade me put on at once. Half dreaming, I complied, and when I had completed my toilet the man stuffed my garments with straw and rags which had been brought to the cell and laid the dummy on the cot. I watched all this speechless, but I felt that it meant freedom. When the dummy had been arranged in a manner to deceive the keenest eyes I was pushed from the room by the man who told me in no uncertain tones to make myself as scarce as possible."

"But the guard?" asked Benjamin.

"Bless you, during all this time I saw nothing of Jack Munroe. If he remained in the neighborhood he kept himself out of sight and did not assist in the liberation. I reached the street unmolested, took down it like a fleeing shadow and got into the out-

skirts as soon as possible. I passed through Germantown ——"

"Then you came directly through the enemy's lines?"

"Yes, but they seemed open for my flight. I slipped by the Chew House where a lot of redcoats seemed to be having a merry time, and nothing would do me but to sneak up to the windows and take a peep inside. It was all red in there," and Tom smiled. "There must have been twenty officers inside having a good time, for one of their number was mounted on a table and singing at the top of his voice. I tell you, Captain Benjamin, my fingers itched to have a good musket, for there would have been a tumbling officer and a lot of spilled wine."

"Just like you, Tom," exclaimed Benjamin. "Your impulses will get you into trouble yet."

"Probably so. But where is Frank?"

"He is not in the camp. We haven't seen him for some time."

"I trust he wasn't foolish enough to go to Philadelphia in hopes of getting me out of prison."

"I cannot say."

"Does the general know where he is?"

"I cannot answer that question either."

"He will be caught if he goes to the city. My escape has been discovered before this and it will throw the whole city into an uproar. They will rake it as with a fine tooth-tomb and their drag-net will take in everything. I know that Captain Frank is able to take care of himself, but sometimes one's head gets into danger despite his ability to keep cool."

"That is true; but perhaps the general would like to see you."

Tom was taken across to Mad Anthony's head-quarters, and the lion of the Revolution gave a quick, glad cry at sight of him.

Benjamin left the young Long Islander with Wayne, and waited for him at his own little place.

Half an hour later Tom emerged from Mad Anthony's quarters, while that officer posted off to Washington.

"There's something brewing," said Tom when he rejoined Benjamin.

"What makes you think so?"

"I saw it in Mad Anthony's eye. We are going to have another tussle with my lords Cornwallis and Howe."

"Mad Anthony didn't say so?"

"Not he. He keeps his counsels, and I guess a boy like me would be the last person he would tell anything to."

"Well, Tom, it looks to me like a fight. I have been to Washington's quarters, whither I was called for the purpose of verifying a certain map."

"A map of what?"

"Of Germantown and vicinity."

"That's it exactly! We are going to surprise the enemy there."

"It is Washington's secret if any one's. But tell me about Priscilla, Tom."

"What can I say about her? I didn't see her once during my absence. She is in the city, I think——"

"She is there!"

"You have heard from her?"

"Indirectly."

"And Captain Frank ——"

Benjamin flushed.

"I don't think he has been favored lately with a letter from her. She writes to me as often as she does to him, I think. Priscilla is in a ticklish place, and her correspondence must, of necessity, be limited. She may manage to get a word through the lines now and then. I think she did get something through not long ago, but it was a message to Mad Anthony."

"I heard of her but once," said Tom. "She was mentioned by one of my guards, a fellow by the name of Simon, who remarked that some of the fair rebels in the city should have their wings cropped."

"And he mentioned Priscilla, did he?"

"Yes, Priscilla and her friend, Mistress Bess Ferguson, who is the niece of the rich old Quaker by that name. They accuse Bess of turning rebel, and it amused me to hear them berate her in all sorts of terms. It was extremely funny," and Tom laughed.

A few minutes later a young corporal came up, extending a letter to Benjamin which that officer took with eagerness.

It was a folded sheet, sealed with wax and stamped with a crest, which he did not recognize.

He uttered an exclamation of surprise as he glanced at the contents of the letter.

"Well, this is strange!" he said, looking at Tom, who was furtively watching him. "Here is a letter from Mistress Beverley ——"

"Not from Priscilla herself?"

"From no one else. She is about to quit the city."

"That's a good move. She should get out of Philadelphia as soon as possible, for she is always in danger there."

"But it looks to me as though her jump is going to be from the frying-pan into the fire."

"How's that?"

"She's going to Germantown."

"Why, there's where the enemy is!"

"Yes."

"Have they banished her from the city?"

"No, she's going thither by invitation."

Tom looked incredulous.

"Who would invite Mistress Beverley to Germantown?"

"It seems that her friend Bess Ferguson has a friend there in the person of Mistress Chew, of the Chew House."

"A few more 'chews' and I shall sneeze," laughed Tom, as he looked at Benjamin in a comical manner. "Well, this beats all. When is she going?"

"In a day or so, she writes."

"She'll be nearer us, you know, but she will have to cut her p's and q's straight while she is with the Chews. They're away up, I'm told, and their house is the finest in Germantown. We'll be apt to see something of it if we get into a fight with the enemy there."

Benjamin folded the letter and thrust it into his pocket without reading it to Tom.

Tom looked a little disappointed, but said nothing, and in a few minutes the pair separated.

Benjamin started off to find the young soldier who had brought him Priscilla's letter, and when found he was told that another had arrived for Frank, at which

Benjamin fell to looking glum, asked no more questions, and walked back.

The day drew to a close and night again asserted her supremacy.

The American camp became quiet and nothing but the challenge of the sentries sounded on the air.

It was the ending of September and the foliage everywhere had received the first tints of autumn and upon the bosom of the Schuylkill, not far away, the waves danced in the soft light of the stars.

A night-hawk screamed his discordant notes as he flitted through the shadows on darkened wing, and over the landscape brooded the silence that seemed to precede a clash of arms.

Suddenly there rose from the lips of a sentry on the outskirts of the camp a clear challenge and a tall figure stopped within a few feet of the lowered bayonet.

"Who goes there?"

"A friend."

The guard leaned forward, his hand on the trigger, for Washington had commanded every person in the

American camp to be on perpetual alertness and extremely cautious.

The tall figure advanced and bent toward the guard.

"Bunker Hill!" fell from the lips of the half muffled figure.

The guard straightened to a "present" and stepped back to let the man pass.

The stranger with the step of a soldier passed the sentry a few feet and, stopping, looked at him.

It was Washington himself.

The great soldier had been going the "grand rounds" alone and at the silent hour of darkness.

He leaned forward and laid his hand on the guard's arm.

"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. Remember that, my man," he said. "The foe are over yonder," and his outstretched hand pointed toward Germantown. "We must relax none of our vigilance. We must feel, each one of us, I mean, that upon our shoulders rest the destinies of our country."

With this his hand left the soldier's arm and the sentry saluted as his eyes filled with tears.

He did not reply, for like a shadow Washington had vanished, and a night-hawk flew by on sombre wing.

The guard for a moment heard footsteps on the ground, but they faded gently, and he was alone again.

Washington proceeded alone into the camp.

He passed on to his own quarters, but it was not to throw himself upon the cot for rest.

He seated himself at a table and by the light of a solitary candle busied himself with some official papers.

The night crept on.

The silence seemed to grow more intense until the sentinel in front of the headquarters was startled by his own tread.

Whenever he passed the window he would look in and see his chief bending over the table, pen or compass in hand.

Midnight came.

Washington rose at last and retired to another room. There he remained for a few moments and the sentinel drew closer to the house and bowed his head.

He knew what was taking place in that little room behind the closed door. Washington was holding communion with his God.

At last the door swung open and the stately presence of Washington was seen again.

He looked over the papers a little more, gathered them together and put all away. Then, with a glance toward the window, he went back into the little chamber and all became quiet again.

The sentry became more alert. He saw everything now as he paced his beat, for he knew that he was guarding the fortunes of America in the person of George Washington.

CHAPTER XIII

BESIEGED

Captain Frank Lowry of the Legion succeeded in making his escape from Philadelphia after the episode of the duel with Major Calhutton in the eating-house.

Fortunately for himself he did not meet any of the enemy, and when he reached Wayne's camp and found that Tom Hapgood had preceded him he was overjoyed.

Mad Anthony greeted him cordially, saying that he had made up his mind to give him a severe reprimand for letting young Montressor go, but, since things had turned out so well, he thought he could congratulate him on his foresight.

One the evening of the 2d of October, a carriage drawn by a pair of black horses entered the straggling street of Germantown, six miles from the Quaker City.

Its occupants were two young ladies who were set down in front of the Chew House.

The travelling companions were Mistresses Bess Ferguson and Priscilla Beverley.

Mistress Bess had received a cordial invitation from the fair tenant of the old house to pay her a visit and included in it was a request to bring Priscilla along.

The girls were delighted with the idea of getting away from the turmoil of the city.

They had been surfeited with attentions from the well-fed and well-groomed British officers, and felt that they would be nearer the American camp during their visit at Germantown.

Priscilla could afford to quit Philadelphia, for General Howe's drag-net had failed to catch Ben Markley, the ardent young patriot, who, with some other members of the True Hearts of Liberty, had succeeded in joining the American army then lying at Pennibecker's Mill, about twenty miles from the city.

Young Markley had gained a good deal of notoriety for refusing to drink the king's health as detailed in our opening chapter, and Lord Howe was anxious to secure him, for he was suspected of liberating Tom

Hapgood; but the young patriot was too sharp for the Britisher and effected his escape.

The girls received a warm welcome at the Chew House.

This famous old mansion, which was destined to play an important part in the battle of Germantown, was built of stone with spacious wings. In various parts of the surrounding grounds stood handsome statues, while shade was plentiful and cooling.

Its owner, Benjamin Chew, was by birth a Marylander, who settled in Pennsylvania, where he became chief justice.

When the Revolution broke out he was suspected of being a Tory, but after the signing of the Declaration he became Whig in his politics and was forced to leave the state, which he did in 1777, for he was arrested by the British and sent to Fredericksburg, Virginia, as a prisoner.

The great old house had sheltered him a long time and now, compelled to leave it, he turned it over to others who were destined to hear cannon-balls crash through its stone walls.

Priscilla and Bess had to drive through a part of the British army to reach their destination.

From the first they became objects of curiosity and smilingly returned the bows of the red-coated officers who lined the road to do them homage.

They had much to tell within the walls of the Chew House, and were listened to with attention.

Mistress Chew welcomed them cordially, saying that she hoped they would do nothing to invoke the ire of the king's men; but that night their souls were sorely tried.

A party of officers came to the mansion and asked permission to occupy the front rooms.

This was granted, as it was policy for the inmates to do so, and before long a noisy banquet was in progress.

The three young ladies shut themselves up in other rooms on the second floor and listened to the uproar down-stairs.

As the fun waxed fast and furious with revel and song, the noise increased until Mistress Chew went to the head of the stairs and called to the officers below.

A handsome captain came into the hall and asked what the young lady wanted.

He was requested to temper the merriment a trifle, as the young ladies were about to retire and wanted to get a good night's sleep.

"By my soul! you shall sleep like the doves you are!" answered the red-coated captain. "I will see that your slumbers are not disturbed. Wine is in and wit is out, but that shall not break your repose."

Thus assured Mistress Chew withdrew and reported.

"It won't be long that way," said Bess. "They will be at it soon, for they are making a night of it."

Sure enough, the temporary quiet was rudely broken by a shout loud enough to awaken the seven sleepers of Ephesus.

Some one was pounding on the heavy front doors.

In another moment several more officers joined their comrades in the house, and as a voice came up-stairs Priscilla exclaimed:

"It is Lieutenant Cummings!"

"Yes, dear, the man who set up the plot against you when you refused to drink the king's health.

He has evidently tracked us thither and is here to repeat his act."

"Which he shall not do!" responded Mistress Chew. "This is our house, though loaned for the time being to the party down-stairs. They shall perpetrate no indignities upon my guests——"

Voices were heard at the bottom of the stairs.

"Fetch them down—all three of the angels!"

"That's right, Cummings. We will have a song from the rebel doves and perhaps a toast."

Mistress Chew lost color.

She opened the door and leaned over the balustrade.

"What is it—gentlemen?" she called down the flight.

"Will you ladies come down a few moments?"

"It is impossible. We are getting ready to retire and——"

"We want beauty at the banquet," was the interruption. "We cannot get along without it."

"You will have to excuse us. I have no heart to disturb my guests. They have come out from the city and are fatigued."

"Why, Mistress Chew, 'tis but six miles into Philadelphia, and your guests have journeyed farther than that without taxing their strength.

But the fair occupant of the mansion was still obdurate.

"I cannot think of having them witness a bout by British officers. It would surely prejudice them against the cause."

Priscilla and Bess, who were staunch Whigs, laughed behind the half-open door.

"Fetch them down, Cummings! You've had a good deal of experience with young ladies and we look to you to furnish additional joy for the feast."

Lieutenant Cummings, who was a tall and handsome young officer, mounted the stairs and half-way up gazed into Mistress Chew's face.

"You will not, you say?" said he. "We do not mean harm to your pretty guests, but we want them to grace the board below."

"I cannot consent to their doing so."

"Then we will be compelled to take them down."

"What! are you British officers? I am astonished

to think that you would offer such an indignity to young ladies."

Not abashed in the least, for the lieutenant was flushed with wine, he held to the balustrade and said:

"Beauty must bow to Mars on this occasion. We will not have it otherwise."

"Why, I thought——"

"With all due respect to you, Mistress Chew, we must see the fair ones."

Mistress Chew withdrew leaving Cummings on the stair while his comrades made the night hideous below.

"What is to be done?" she said as she presented herself to her guests.

"Barricade the door!" cried Bess Ferguson. "They will not attempt to force it, surely."

"They are heated with wine and there's no telling to what lengths they will go."

"Who heads the roysterers?" asked Priscilla.

"Major Gordon, of the Queen's Rangers."

"I know him," cried Bess. "He has been our guest on numerous occasions. Bar the door against him, I say."

"Then it shall be done since you know something of this fellow," responded Mistress Chew. "We will keep them out at the sacrifice of our lives."

"Hoping all the time for the best," whispered Priscilla.

The young ladies fell to work and in a short time had placed a heavy table and some chairs against the door which they had previously locked and, when finished, they stepped back and surveyed their work.

"They're talking on the stair," said Mistress Chew in low tones.

"Holding a council of war doubtless."

The hum of voices which came up the steps was soon followed by the tread of many feet and then voices in the corridor on the second floor.

"The enemy is at hand!" exclaimed Mistress Ferguson.

Presently some one struck the door a goodly blow and the girls stepped back and waited.

"Ho! in there, young ladies?"

The fair trio looked at one another and smiled.

"Let's parley," came from the outside. "If you will open the door we will have a talk and ——"

"The door will not be opened!" interrupted the voice of the determined Mistress Chew.

"Hear that, Gordon? They won't listen to us."

"Just as if we were going to devour them like the cannibals of the south seas. I say, my fair ones, we don't intend the slightest indignity. We only want to have a little conference."

"You will state your proposition from where you are."

"But talking through a door is not permissible in polite society."

"Neither is insulting young ladies after dark."

It was Bess who spoke and her fine eyes glowed with animation as she uttered the words.

"That's Mistress Ferguson, the damsel who has put General Huston off until after the king has declared the rebels free and independent."

At this there was a laugh at Mistress Bess' expense and she turned defiantly toward the door.

"You can wait as long for the door to open as

General Huston may wait for Mistress Ferguson!" was her retort.

This time the laugh was not so loud, but the next moment the door was struck heavily by the hilt of a sword.

"Open!" cried some one. "We'll break in if you do not."

Mistress Chew opened an old-fashioned wardrobe in one corner of the room and took out three muskets.

Her face was white.

She placed a musket in the hands of each of her fair guests and advanced to the door, wearing a look of determination.

"Gentlemen," she cried, "we are not unarmed. We shall defend ourselves from your insults to the last extremity. Chew House is more or less an arsenal, and a part of it is now in our hands."

"What's that? By the furies! they have weapons of some sort."

"We hold three good British muskets whose bullets can penetrate the door and do some damage beyond.

You will therefore betake yourselves from the hall and from the house as well before ——"

"Don't let a lass scare His Majesty's soldiers!" cut in some one in the hall. "Break the door down and show these fair vixens that we are not fools."

A short silence reigned in the corridor.

"You will shoot through the door at my command," said Mistress Chew quietly to her friends.

She spoke loud enough for those outside to hear.

There was a hasty shuffling of feet beyond the portal.

"Ho!" cried some one. "There's Major André on the stair."

Those who turned and could see after their dissipation looked and saw a handsome young officer halfway up the stair.

"Gentlemen," he said in firm tones, "I have orders from General Howe which compel you to quit this house at once."

"The deuce you have!" roared Cummings, who did not like the young major.

"You doubt me at your peril, Lieutenant Cum-

mings. The orders are peremptory. You must quit this house and leave its inmates to themselves."

"Some one has betrayed us."

"Never mind how the news reached the general. You will come away immediately."

There were muttered curses and some growling, the crowd of redcoats went down the stair, and Major John André with a smile on his face saw the last one slink from Chew House and lose himself in the darkness.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CHASSEUR

The German Chasseurs were stationed some distance from Germantown, near the banks of the Schuylkill, and not far from Wissahickon Creek, where the latter debouches into the river.

On the night when the banquet at Chew House so disturbed the rest of the three young ladies a large chasseur might have been seen seated on his horse along a road that ran lonely through a belt of timber.

He was doing sentry duty in that quarter, and so lonely was the spot that whenever a night-hawk flew by he dodged as though a bullet had sped from a patriot rifle.

At last the head of the sentry dropped forward on his broad bosom, and he seemed to sleep.

The moment that this took place there came from among the shadows behind the horse a figure that at first resembled an animal creeping along the ground —skimming the surface with its darkish belly.

The chasseur did not see this creeping object which made no noise, and not until it reached a spot within arms' length of the sleeping man did it resolve itself into a human being.

Then it became a lithe youth, dressed in buff and blue, and a pair of keen eyes regarded the imperilled man.

The horse pricked his ears half sleepily, and the man slept on.

At last the object on the ground drew so close to the chasseur that he could have touched him.

"Now's my time," said a low voice. "That fellow sleeps like a log. Perhaps he is dreaming of his home across the sea and not of the coming fight. I have him at my mercy, and why should I spare him? They hanged my father and orphaned me on Long Island. Why should I spare a single one of them when I have taken an oath of vengeance?"

The speaker drew still nearer.

He drew from beneath the folds of his frock a pistol, which he directed at the unconscious man in the saddle.

Tom Hapgood's finger was at the trigger.

He looked over the barrel that glinted in the soft starlight and caught sight of the face the pistol covered.

He had but to press the trigger to send a human soul into eternity, but it was not war.

Tom had slipped up on the man with the stealth of the fox; he had glided from Washington's camp and, skurrying over hill and dale with the fleetness of that same tireless animal, had come upon the picket of the enemy.

The oath of revenge which he had taken after his father's death he had not forgotten for a moment.

It had been with him ever since, animating his life and filling him with a desire to shed the blood of the enemy.

Now he had his opportunity.

The chasseur had never harmed him; he was but a hired soldier; his prince had sold him to King George for so much gold, and had thrust him from home and friends to fight in a cause in which he had no heart, and perhaps to die in a foreign land.

The chasseur was one of the Hessian hirelings—one of those men who fought like tigers for gold, and whose deeds sometimes brought the blush of shame to the cheeks of their officers.

Tom thought of these things as he stood at the chasseur's side with the cocked pistol in his hand.

How peacefully the giant slept!

Surely a ruthless demon in red would not sleep thus.

Perhaps the chasseur was not like his kind; this one might possess a kindly nature, a good heart.

But the oath! Ah! there it was, and it rose before Tom like a command.

A stern look flashed up in his eye; he had beaten down the impulses of mercy and the chasseur must die.

He wore the scarlet uniform of the king's army and that was enough.

Tom thrust his hand a little further upward.

The muzzle of the pistol almost touched the man's face when he thought of something.

What if others were near?

This man might not be the only one in the neighborhood, and the flash of the pistol might seal the avenger's doom.

The thought went through Tom's mind like a flashing train of powder.

He lowered the pistol and crept away.

Then he made a circle of the man, using his eyes and ears, but finally came back to the prey.

The chasseur was sleeping still.

Once more Tom Hapgood crept to his side.

Once more the weapon of the avenger was uplifted and it crept forward as before.

This time he did not hesitate.

The report of the pistol cut the silence that prevailed in that haunted spot and the heavy form of the king's chasseur toppled in the saddle.

There was a little cry, the horse started forward, but Tom with the alertness of the acrobat sprang forward and seized the lines.

The animal stopped and the avenger led him back while he stooped over his victim.

Tom saw the bulky figure on the ground, the heavy

boots touching the edge of the road and the head on the grass.

He leaned over the swarthy face and listened.

There was no sound.

"For my father!" was all the boy avenger said half audibly as he got upon his feet again. "They did it and they must pay the penalty. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth!"

It was the old Mosaic law and Tom Hapgood was its executioner.

The boy did not despoil the dead, only taking the handsomely mounted pistols from the holsters. These he examined for a moment and then replacing them mounted himself.

In a little while there was nothing along the road but the dead.

Tom rode away over hill and dale on the captured steed which did not seem to miss the giant.

It was daylight when the boy rode into the American camp.

"What's that yonder?" asked Captain Lowry, as he spied something between him and the horizon. "By

my life's best day! some one is coming this way mounted."

"Why, 'tis Tom Hapgood!" replied his companion, who was Captain Pierce. "Where has the boy been? And that horse?"

"Another notch on the stick, no doubt," responded Frank.

They continued to watch the youth till he drew rein before them, a light of triumph flashing up in his eyes as he looked down upon them.

"Where did you get that horse?" asked Captain Benjamin.

"Where I left his owner."

"'Tis a chasseur's horse."

"Right you are, Captain Ben. And he was a big chasseur, too."

"What! did you kill him, Tom?"

The eyes glowed again.

The young Long Islander looked into the two faces for a moment in silence and then said:

"Have you forgotten? It was on the island. They hanged my father!"

Then the young avenger coolly stroked the sleek hide of the big steed and smiled.

"I shall give the horse to our Mad Anthony," he said. "I heard him say yesterday that his own horse was nearly used up and this one will carry him well."

"And do you think Mad Anthony will accept the gift?"

"Why not? The horse can carry him."

"Perhaps, but the manner of its capture."

"I can try him at any rate," and Tom gathered up the lines.

"Wait a minute!" said Frank. "What's that sticking from beneath the saddle?"

Tom turned and looked.

He saw a bit of something sticking from under the saddle and wondered why he had not noticed it before.

When he drew it forth he found it to be a folded bit of heavy paper.

"Here," he said, handing it down to Captain Benjamin. "I don't care for it."

The captain of the Boys of Liberty took the paper and unfolded it.

"What is it?" asked Frank.

Benjamin looked up at Tom.

"Are you sure the man is dead?" he asked.

"Why shouldn't he be? Do you think I miss men at three paces?"

"Why, no; but this is strange."

Tom's look became a stare.

"What is it?" he cried. "Hand me the paper."

"No! But what puzzles me is how did this get into the dead chasseur's hands?"

"But you haven't said what it is," cried the impatient Tom. "I'm dying to know."

"Well, sir, this is a brief statement of General Knyphausen's command, its numbers, its position and everything. It is most important. The chasseur must have been desirous of having possession of such information but, had his general known it, you would never have got to shoot him to-night, Tom."

"Then it will be news for Washington."

"And just when he needs it."

"I'll take it to him," cried Tom, holding out his

hand for the paper. "Hand it over here, Captain Ben. I'll take it to the general."

But Benjamin drew back whereupon Tom's eyes flashed.

"You won't, eh?"

"I'll see that it reaches Washington," said Benjamin.

"I'll do that myself. Here, sir," and the dragoon's pistol was thrust downward into Benjamin's face. "Deliver up that paper or by the eternal gods! I'll send you after the chasseur!"

There was no mistaking the mien of the boy avenger.

His whole being seemed to have changed in a moment.

His face was colorless and his eyes glowed with mad determination.

Frank leaned toward Benjamin and gave him a look of advice.

"But, Tom ——"

"No 'buts,' sir," cried the Long Islander. "Hand over my property. I killed for it and it is mine!"

The speaker's hand seemed to quiver round the butt of the pistol and his finger played with the dark trigger.

"Hand it over, Captain Ben!"

Benjamin hesitated no longer, but handed up the paper which Tom received with the disengaged hand.

"I'll see that General Washington gets it," he said grimly. "Never fear for that."

Tom struck the steed in the rowels with his heels and was off like a bolt.

"He would have shot you, Benjamin," remarked Captain Lowry as he looked after the horse and his rider.

"I know it. 'Shoot' was in his eye and I saw it. If I had withheld the paper a moment longer I would have had a bullet in my head. He had a bead on me all the time. But how did that chasseur get that information?"

"You need not seek the solution of the mystery, for the man is dead. It is fortunate anyhow, for Washington, strange to say, had information concerning every other command in the British army but

Knyphausen's. I say the shooting of the chasseur was most fortunate."

"In a military point of view, but it was bad for the chasseur," smiled Frank.

A few minutes after quitting the two young captains Tom Hapgood was halted by the guard at Washington's headquarters.

The boy made his wants known promptly. He wanted to see the commander-in-chief.

A moment later the stalwart figure of Washington appeared in the doorway.

"Ah!" cried Tom as he saluted. "I have a bit of paper for the commander-in-chief."

Washington came forward and took the paper from Tom's hand.

The young Long Islander watched him as he opened it and mastered its contents.

"Where did you get this?" asked Washington.

"Where I left the person who had it."

"And where was that, pray?"

"Near where the Wissahickon flows into the Schuylkill."

"What! so hear the enemy's lines?"

"It was a British picket—a chasseur, Your Excellency."

"Your name, young sir?"

"Tom Hapgood, now of Wayne's Legion."

Washington said no more, but with another look at the young avenger reëntered the house.

Thus very important information reached Washington on the eve of Germantown.

CHAPTER XV

A RIDE WITH GENERAL HOWE

THE morning after their night of terror in the Chew House found the young ladies still vexed.

That they should be so insulted by the king's troops nettled all, and Mistress Chew, who could think of nothing else, determined to report matters to General Howe.

She consulted with Priscilla and Bess, and the council of war approved her plan.

Major André, who had come to their rescue so gallantly with the British general's orders, had departed after receiving their thanks, but they feared a repetition of the outrage.

The two marble lions before the door of the mansion showed marks of British temper, for there were sword cuts on their heads, and this angered Mistress Chew the more.

They were about to set off on their errand of re-

monstrance when, upon looking down the road, they beheld General Howe and his staff approaching.

"The best luck imaginable!" said Mistress Chew. "The general we shall have to himself."

Thereupon she awaited the officer from the porch of the mansion, and when he saw her he drew rein and bowed.

"Will General Howe be so kind as to alight a while?" asked the young lady.

Certainly. General Howe, always willing to bow at the shrine of beauty, would come in and see what the fair one wanted.

As he entered the old mansion through its wide doors, soon to be riddled with bullets, he doffed his plumed chapeau.

In another moment he caught sight of Priscilla and Bess in the hallway and stopped with a furtive glance at the mistress of the mansion.

What did it mean? Had Mistress Chew set a trap for the king's general? Oh, no, not at all.

"This is my friend, Mistress Beverley," she said as Priscilla courtesied.

General Howe remembered, for had she not caused a revocation of a certain order of his, so far as her personal safety went? He had not forgotten the incident and saying that he believed he had met the young lady before, he turned, for Mistress Chew was introducing Bess.

The fair niece of the Quaker-Tory felt her cheeks flush for she knew that General Howe would recognize the name as he did.

"Mistress Ferguson!" exclaimed Howe. "Ah, the niece of my friend Thomas."

Bess dropped her gaze to the floor.

"General Howe," proceeded Mistress Chew, "we have passed through a very unpleasant experience. We were forced to give our parlors over to a lot of your officers who not only made merry in the house last night, but who insulted me and my guests."

"But, my dear Mistress Chew, I ordered them hence."

"True, but does that end the matter? When may we not expect another visit from the same officers? Major André came with your order in the nick of

time, 'tis true, but we would like to have the entire freedom of the house."

General Howe would see that the scenes of the past night were not repeated in Chew House.

He did not approve of such roystering, though he could not be expected to control his officers at all times.

They liked wine and women and as America seemed full of fair girls he thought his soldiers should be excused some of their excesses.

The Britisher was very courteous and was about to depart when Mistress Chew proposed that they have a little wine.

Now if there was any person who liked a good bottle better than this. same General Howe he would have been hard to find.

He was never known to refuse a glass of wine, and at times he knew how to tarry too long at the cup.

Therefore, when Mistress Chew spoke of wine—and he knew what the cellars of the old mansion held—he suddenly remembered that his morning business was not so urgent.

Mistress Chew called some servants and bade one bring wine from the cellar, while others were told to prepare a table in the best room.

In less than ten minutes General Howe and his chief of staff, a handsome young officer named McDonald, were seated at the table with the bright eyes of the vivacious young ladies upon them.

The three girls were chatty and full of wit.

"When shall we hear of another engagement?" asked Mistress Chew as Howe filled his sixth glass.

"That is a question I cannot answer."

"You do not think that Washington will assume the offensive?"

"He is not expected to do anything of the kind. I learn from our scouts that he has advanced to Skippack's Creek, which is about sixteen miles from here, but he is not likely to come closer."

"You outnumber him, do you not, General Howe?" asked Priscilla.

"Indeed we do, my dear," was the reply. "We have about eighteen thousand men well posted. I

shall be pleased some time to escort you girls through our lines just to show you what a splendid army I have the honor to command."

"That would be enjoyable!" cried the fair rebel of Boston. "But you must not forget, General Howe, that I am accounted a rebel at heart."

"I am not insensible to such reports," was the quick rejoinder. "But I am not afraid to show you the best army on the continent. It might be wise in you after reviewing our forces to make a report to your friends in the American camp."

"Why could not General Howe escort us through his army to-day?"

The general smiled.

"You are not ready, young misses," said he. "It will take you some time to make up your toilette and secure your mounts."

"Not so long as you think," put in Mistress Chew. "We have but a few touches for the boudoir, and as for the horses, they are now in the stables."

"Then I see no objection to enjoying the pleasure of your company," bowed the British general.

The girls rose from the table and went at once to their apartments.

A few minutes later they reappeared arrayed for a ride and the horses were brought round by the servants.

The morning was crispy and bright.

The fatal mist which was soon to follow it had not risen for its deadly purpose, and as the little company moved off with General Howe in the midst of his fair guests he smiled and felt the wine he had taken.

He took them first through the camp of the German chasseurs, commenting on their heavy uniform and their method of fighting, then he turned to the camp of the Queen's American Rangers, whose dark green clothes, with golden ornaments, rendered them conspicuous.

These were the men the Americans hated so cordially.

They were Tories who had enlisted in the king's army and who were the bitterest foes the patriots had.

"The Rangers fight well, do they not?" asked Mistress Ferguson, as they rode out of the camp of this detachment.

"We have no reason to complain of them. They fight well under our trained officers."

"And why should they not fight, General Howe?" playfully put in Priscilla, "since they do so with a rope round their necks?"

"That is true in a manner, Mistress Beverley. I am aware that General Wayne hates them so that he threatens to hang all who fall into his hands."

"That must be an exaggerated report of some remark by General Wayne, for he is a soldier above all things and will treat his prisoners as they deserve notwithstanding the affray at Paoli."

A slight flush came to the cheeks of the British general at this, for already the midnight massacre at Paoli was known as a stain on the British arms.

As the little party rode along Priscilla and Bess took particular notice of the different camps, the number of men, the positions of the cannon—in fact of everything.

The glittering staff riding behind the little party talked glibly about the situation and some of their remarks could not help falling upon the girls' ears.

"I don't see why we can't have another tussle with these ragamuffins," said one of the staff. "We gave them such a good dressing on the Brandywine that we ought to push on and end the war right here. They won't fight only when cornered ——"

The speaker stopped suddenly for Priscilla had turned and singled him out.

Her patriotism surged to her lips and with a glance at General Howe she said:

"It seems to me, sir, that the rebels fought pretty well at Bunker Hill, from the red spots on the grass after the battle."

The staff officer crimsoned.

"I—really, miss," he stammered, "I did not think you overheard my remark."

"I could not help overhearing it since it was spoken in a loud tone. General Howe here knows that he is entertaining a Boston girl and he has said that the air up there is ladened with rebellion."

The general laughed.

A few rods further on the camp of the fine-looking men of the Fortieth Foot was reached.

Their brilliantly scarlet uniforms fairly shone in the rays of the October sun and drew forth exclamations of admiration from the girls.

"These are our fighting men," said General Howe proudly, as he waved his hand toward a group of tall privates. "These are the men who held the hill at White Plains."

"I have heard of them," quoth Priscilla.

"They held the hill against every assault, and Washington did his best to dislodge them."

"Isn't this the regiment whose men were finally driven off the hill by the Boys of Liberty?"

General Howe looked chagrined.

"I believe the Fortieth did move back a trifle when the young fellows came against them. But it was only for a moment. That dash was a forlorn hope and a useless sacrifice ordered, so I am told, by Wayne. However, wherever the Fortieth fights it is sure to give a good account of itself."

An hour passed before General Howe announced that he could show his fair friends no more.

"You know now what we have," he said, address-

ing Priscilla as he reined in his handsome sorrel. "You are at liberty, Mistress Beverley, to acquaint your friends with what you have seen."

"And what if I should take General Howe at his word?"

"No displeasure will result. I have shown you the flower of the king's army in North America and you have had an opportunity to inspect it."

"You have a fine army, General Howe. It is a pity that such handsome men should be brought across the sea to perish on strange battle-fields."

"The fortunes of war, Mistress Beverley. We are soldiers and, as such, know only obedience. That is our duty. We serve the king first, our God next."

The little party rode back some distance, escorted by General Howe, who, at a certain point, stopped and said that he would proceed in another direction.

This left the girls at liberty to ride the remainder of the distance alone.

Partings were exchanged, the British general lifting his hat as he bade them good-bye, and in another moment the glittering band was gone.

"It is a formidable army," remarked Bess after a moment's silence.

"Eighteen thousand well-drilled and well-fed men to meet half their number of shoeless, ragged, half-starved soldiers!"

"But men filled with love for a just cause," said Mistress Chew. "I trust the drums of this 'rabble,' as they call Washington's army, will beat soon for British ears."

"They will!" cried Priscilla. "Their music will not be long delayed, I am sure. And when they beat and the 'rabble' rush upon this well-appointed camp, as I believe they will, there will be some bloody work. General Howe is a generous soul, secure in the belief of invincibility, but let Wayne's Legion, or Pulaski's troopers, dash into his midst and British drums will beat the death knell of his bravest men."

"Ah, here we are!" exclaimed Bess at this juncture. "I have enjoyed the ride very much, thanks to General Howe."

The old house with its marble lions had been reached and the girls dismounted at the block.

The horses were taken to the stables to be groomed and the fair trio entered the house.

On the table they found a folded note and when they opened it they found it to be an apology from the officers who had occupied the house the previous night.

"None is needed!" cried Mistress Chew, as she tore the note into fragments which she scattered over the floor.

CHAPTER XVI

THE NIGHT MARCH

MEANTIME there was increased activity in the patriot camp.

Washington was determined to give the enemy battle for Philadelphia.

His army consisted of about twelve thousand men, many of whom were militia or state troops who could not be depended upon. He knew this and had given them places which suited them.

It was the night of the 3d of October, 1777.

The American camp along Skippack's Creek showed signs of animation.

Sixteen miles lay between Washington and the enemy, sixteen miles over hills and dales, along ravines and rivulets under the stars, with spies swarming the country, for the country folk were usually against the cause, having accepted the forgiveness of the king.

Little farms were everywhere with their great old-fashioned barns and stone houses.

Fields of whitened buckwheat interspersed the landscape, and everywhere the people seemed contented, though hostile armies lay within striking distance of one another.

Since the council of war which we have witnessed Washington had called a final one.

At this one all the generals were present and the chieftain's plans were discussed by every officer.

There was no dissenting voice.

All were for battle.

The cool-headed Knox, the dashing Pulaski and the impetuous Wayne had voted to fight, and Washington, eager to throw himself upon the enemy at Germantown, heard the decision with a smile.

The march was to be taken up during the night, for it was the intention of the commander-in-chief to surprise the enemy at dawn and give them another trouncing after the manner of Trenton.

This time he would not have only Hessians to fight.

Washington knew that Howe's army consisted for the most part of trained British soldiers, that these men

knew nothing but duty to their monarch, and that under the eyes of their generals they would fight like tigers in scarlet.

Yet at times Washington doubted if he would be able to reach Chestnut Hill from which the dash would be made into the British camp.

He knew that Howe would be on the alert, for the Trenton surprise was a lesson which the British commander had not forgotten. It had taught all that Washington was sleepless and aggressive, and that they would have to be ready for him at all times.

The Boys of Liberty found themselves drawn up on the right of the Legion.

The night was bright and starlit.

The drums had beaten at last for Germantown, and the long roll echoing up and down the defiles of Skippack had died away in the far distance.

Mad Anthony had ridden down his line seeing that everything was ready.

Half muffled in his cloak, which in a moment of enthusiasm he threw over his shoulder, he looked with an eagle eye upon his "boys," as he called his

soldiers, and more than once told them to " Remember Paoli."

Just as if a single one of the whole lot could forget it!

Captain Pierce and Frank stood together, waiting for the command to march.

Not far away, with a look of eagerness on his face, stood the Long Island youth, Tom Hapgood.

Perhaps he thought of the chasseur whom he had left at the roadside under the stars.

Near him was Ben Markley, who had made his escape from Philadelphia, and in the ranks of the company were several new recruits—the members of the True Hearts of Liberty.

At last a command rang out loud and clear.

" Forward!"

And Pulaski, hearing it from the lips of Washington, turned to his gallants and said in his broken tongue:

" Forvarts, brudern!"

The steeds pricked up their ears, the men shifted their muskets, glanced down—many of them—at their

shoeless feet and sprang away with a soldier's eagerness.

What if they knew that it would be the last march for many?

What if they felt—some of them, at least—that they had kissed their wives and little ones for the last time?

This did not daunt them.

It was all for the sacred cause of Liberty, and if they fell they knew that others would step into their places and carry on the fight.

The drums kept time for some distance down the country road.

The farmers heard the tramp and looked out of their houses to see something dark winding underneath the stars.

They did not know what it was till they tried to investigate, when they were seized by the watchful Americans, bound and carried along, for Washington was not going to take any chances.

"We shall strike them by daylight," whispered Frank to Benjamin as they trudged along.

"By daylight, I hope," was the answer. "We shall give them another lesson in strategy. Howe does not suspect. Indeed, he laughs at Washington's 'ragamuffins,' but these same ragamuffins are liable to sleep in his camp to-morrow night."

On, on moved the ghostly host.

Washington, riding on his white horse, pushed from command to command and said something encouraging to all.

He noticed the shoeless feet of hundreds, noticed them with a sigh, but his face glowed with coming victory, and perhaps he saw in the future the final victory and the long rest from battle.

The stars went down the courses of the sky.

Light winds fanned the cheeks of the marching men, who kept as close together as possible, and now and then a bird frightened from her nest flew screaming in front of the files.

But few words were spoken.

It was not such a march as on the wild winter night when the same army fought the snow and sleet of the Jerseys to fall upon Rall, at Trenton.

Now the night was an autumn one, and the odors of the fields were in the nostrils of all, instead of the cutting sleet.

At last the army halted.

"What is it?" asked Benjamin of Captain Lowry.

"We may be near the pickets."

Presently an officer came riding back along the line.

"It is Mad Anthony himself," said Frank.

Wayne pulled rein in front of the Boys of Liberty.

"The picket is just ahead—at a house," said he as he leaned from his saddle. "He must be silenced. I want five men from this command to undertake the work."

The Boys of Liberty were eager to go, but the voice of Wayne continued:

"Captains Lowry and Pierce with Tom Hapgood and two others will go. Be cautious. No shooting, understand."

Benjamin saluted.

He selected two other members of the company and followed Wayne back over the road.

"It is at the House down there."

"Ah! the Morton House," said Benjamin.

"Yes. The picket may be on the porch. There may be more than one man. Be careful, extremely so. Everything depends on caution. A mistake will not only precipitate matters, but will lose us everything."

"We will do our duty."

Mad Anthony rode back and the five Boys of Liberty were left to themselves.

"You must curb your temper," said Frank, laying his hand upon Tom's shoulder. "You must not let your rage get the better of you. This is for the army. Now, forward!"

The Morton House, which was a large stone affair after the manner of the day, stood a short distance from the road, traversed by the army of surprise.

It was supposed to be a picket post of the enemy and, as such, was a dangerous thing.

The five young soldiers led by Benjamin crept cautiously forward until they saw the old mansion loom between them and the stars.

Then they halted.

At first the very stillness of death seemed to pervade the vicinity, but all at once they heard a laugh.

It seemed to come from the porch of the Morton House.

The picket was there!

The boys crept through the shrubbery in the front yard and, hugging the ground, listened with all ears.

They were not long discovering that the porch sheltered two soldiers, nor that the owner of the house, upon retiring, had placed a table on the porch.

This table he had nearly covered with bottles of wine for the picket.

It was a feast for the poor pickets and they did not hesitate to make the most of it before the "grand relief" should come round.

It was fun for the young soldiers to hear the laughter and jests of the red-coated wine-bibbers.

"It's an easier job than we bargained for," said Tom. "We can walk right up to them and ——"

"Don't expect such an easy victory," broke in Frank. "The sight of an enemy will sober those fellows in a

moment and we shall have our hands full though we outnumber them."

"I can't believe it."

"Wait and see."

The boys waited a while longer and then crept nearer.

They could now see the British on the porch and there were but two of them.

But they were giants in scarlet, and their muskets rested in the hollows of their arms, while they drank wine and toasted everybody from the king to their friend, the corporal.

"Ready!" whispered Benjamin. "Frank, you and Tom will take the fellow on the right. We will look after his friend."

"Here's to the king!" roared out the right hand man at this moment.

"We drink it standing ——"

"Charge!" shouted Benjamin.

The Boys of Liberty dashed forward and leaped upon the porch.

"The rebels!" cried the toast maker, as he dropped his glass and snatched up his musket.

"Down with the British!" shouted Tom Hapgood as he threw himself upon the soldier in front of him.

The struggle was a desperate one.

The men were not only giants in figure but they were veritable Samsons.

The table and glasses were overturned and the floor of the porch became in a moment a crimson sea.

Wine flowed in every direction as the bottles were broken and the sounds of the struggle reached every corner of the house.

It was all the Boys of Liberty could do to secure their enemies despite the fact that the wine had gone to their heads.

Frank had to strike his man several hard blows upon the head and Tom tried in vain to throttle him into silence.

The owner of the house hearing the scuffle ran to the porch, but some one threw him back into the hall and shut the door in his face.

Several times one of the giants was nearly free, but the importance of their capture rendered the Boys of Liberty determined and at last the picket was secured.

"What's the matter?" asked one of the prisoners. "We can't walk to Skippack Creek."

Frank Lowry smiled.

"You will remain here till the army comes up."

"The—army? Great Cæsar! you are joking with us."

"Never more serious in my life. Where's the next picket?"

"We're the last one. Just ahead is Germantown."

A few minutes later the head of the army came up, and Wayne took possession of the astonished captives.

A streak of morning lay in the east and the sky in that direction began to redden.

Washington now rode forward and looked at the rise in front of them.

It was Chestnut Hill, and from there the attack would be made.

Knox hurried up with the artillery.

Pulaski's troopers twisted their mustaches and loosened their swords in their scabbards; Wayne threw off his cloak so as to give free swing to his massive arms and looked proudly down the line of the Legion.

Every man was on the alert. Nothing stood between them and the British army but a few rods of road.

A brief silence followed the halt in sight of the hill and then out upon the morning air rang the voice of Washington :

" Forward ! Let every man do his duty ! "

CHAPTER XVII

GERMANTOWN

THE fancied security of the British at Germantown was something wonderful.

With his eighteen thousand men Lord Howe lay at ease thinking little of an attack, and when the first guns opened the battle he could hardly believe that the Continentals were upon him.

Even then he did not want to believe it, but when he saw the charging columns in buff and blue led by Wayne and Sullivan he drew back in genuine alarm.

Surely the lion had broken through the net, the dogs of war again had slipped their leash and the air rang with battle.

Germantown was then a straggling street with the British tents on either side.

At one end was Mount Airy and further down toward the other stood the Chew House where dwelt Mistress Peggy Chew, the young lady whom we have already introduced to the reader.

The onslaught of the Americans was something terrific.

They swept everything before them.

The enemy, struck in the front and flank, drew back and then stood their ground.

They fired straight into the faces of their foes, but the impetuous provincials did not stop for their resistance but came on and on.

"Forward!" rang out the voice of Wayne. "Remember Paoli! Down with the British!"

It was almost hand to hand in some places.

Men fell like wheat before the fire of the rebels.

From the steps of the Billmeyer house Washington directed the battle, his face calm in every danger and his mind upon the one thing which he had promised himself—the defeat of the foe.

The Boys of Liberty, led by Captain Pierce, with Frank at his side, came down the street under the eyes of Mad Anthony, with every nerve at tension and flushed cheeks.

Now they would halt a moment while there poured

a destructive fire straight into the scarlet ranks and then, stopping to reload, would dash on again.

"Charge!"

It was again the clarion voice of Mad Anthony.

Muskets were lowered and the bayonet was used.

A panic seemed to take possession of the redcoats.

They saw before them a whirlwind of destruction and death.

Their officers, conspicuous in their uniforms, tried to rally them, but the men went on pell-mell down the street followed by the Americans till the battle seemed won.

Howe himself was carried away in the general rout.

There seemed now nothing but victory in the front.

Wayne was pressing ahead of the Chew House.

He had forced the enemy beyond it when suddenly from every window blazed a furnace of flame.

Colonel Musgrave, one of the best officers in the British army, had thrown his regiment into the old stone mansion and every loophole had been manned.

Men in buff and blue pitched in every direction.

"On! on!" cried Mad Anthony, who seemed the very incarnation of battle. "Let the Chew House go. Press the enemy to final defeat!"

But Knox, who came up at that moment, shook his head.

He was the cool head of the army.

"We cannot leave a foe like this in our rear," he said. "The Chew House must be taken first."

Wayne let out an oath and turned to Washington.

The commander-in-chief sustained Knox and the Americans came back to capture the enemy in the stone fort.

"Why do we not push on?" cried Captain Pierce. "In another half hour the battle will be won."

Ah! indeed it would have been but for the fatal blunder of the Chew House fight.

A part of the field was already enveloped in a heavy fog which gave few promises of lifting soon.

One American regiment clashed into another and each poured a volley of death into the faces of friends instead of foes.

Washington saw this and his lofty brow clouded.

In vain did the officers of the two commands try to avoid the blunder, but the volleys crashed till the ground lay thick with patriots.

Cannon-balls plunged through the walls of houses dealing death in every direction, while fire flashed from every window of the Chew House.

Colonel Musgrave had resolved to hold the house or perish in the attempt.

Time and again the Americans rushed upon the house, but were driven back.

Lieutenant Smith advanced with a flag of truce, but a concealed enemy shot him down, and another brave spirit who ran to the very windows for the purpose of setting fire to the structure shared the same fate.

At times the house itself was enveloped in a whirling sheet of flame and the roar became deafening.

Washington saw the fog settling down deeper and darker than ever and he must have prayed for a clear day.

"Form! form!" cried Mad Anthony. "We must take the house!"

The brave Continentals lined up with depleted ranks and looked at the fort.

They pressed shoulder to shoulder and shut their teeth hard. Many were barefooted, but that made little difference. It was a fight for human liberty.

"Charge!"

Sword in hand, Wayne led the charge.

He was a mark for an hundred muskets in the windows of the Chew House, and fire flashed into his very face.

"Forward! Take the house!"

The Boys of Liberty in the front line bent their heads to the storm of lead and pressed almost to the riddled doors of the old mansion.

They seemed on the eve of success, when there burst from every loophole a fiery blast of death.

"On! on!" shouted Captain Pierce. "To the doors! Batter them down!"

The Boys pressed forward, though one-half their number seemed to have fallen.

They reached the steps beyond the marble lions.

Suddenly a face was seen at one of the windows.

It was not the powder-blackened face of one of the defenders.

"My God!" cried Frank, as he clutched Benjamin's sleeve and pointed at the apparition. "Look! Benjamin, look! 'Tis Priscilla!"

Benjamin was too amazed to answer him.

He, too, had seen the face and recognized it.

How came it there? Priscilla was thought to be in Philadelphia, yet they had had an inkling of her intended visit to Peggy Chew.

"Back! back!" cried the girl at the window. "You will all be lost! Back! back! if you value your lives!"

Then the face vanished in a cloud of battle smoke, and another volley burst into the faces of the young Americans.

The Boys were too astonished to reply to the volley, for all had seen Priscilla at the window.

The volley seemed to finish the Boys of Liberty.

Frank whirled half-way round, and Benjamin turned white in another moment.

"Forward!" again cried Wayne, and just then Pulaski's legion dashed up.

The fight for possession of the house now became more terrible than ever.

Time and again the Americans charged it, now passing beyond the lions and now met with a volley of fire before they could reach them.

The ground seemed covered with the fallen.

Washington saw all this through the gathering mist that mingled with the smoke about Chew's house.

"Once more!"

Wayne was reluctant to give it up.

The British were defeated but for the old house and the fog.

He raged like a lion in battle.

Bearing a charmed life, he was everywhere, and his hat rose above his head as he cheered his followers on.

"We can't take it!" said Benjamin. "Half of the Boys are dead, and ——"

Just then some one sprang to his side and shouted in his ear:

"We can take it from the rear! There seems to be no one at the windows there."

The speaker was Tom Hapgood.

The face of the young Long Islander was black with powder stains, and his hat was gone.

"Come!" he cried. "To the rear of the house! We can batter down the doors there and win the day.'

Benjamin turned and followed.

The Boys of Liberty were at his heels, and in another moment they had reached the garden behind the house.

"Forward!" shouted Captain Pierce. "For liberty and justice! For freedom in North America!"

They dashed at the old house from the garden.

But all at once windows flew open, and from each a simoon of fire struck them full in their faces.

Fortunately the British overshot their mark, and in another second the young soldiers were pounding at the doors.

But it was not to be.

They were forced to give up the attack.

It was a resistance which no human being could defeat.

Captain Benjamin, bleeding from two wounds, broke his sword on the door, as half a dozen bullets sped past his face, and fell back with his heroes.

In another second all knew that Cornwallis had come up with his fresh troops, and these were hurled in solid masses against the Americans.

Despite all this, however, the patriots stood their ground with the tenacity of tigers and fell slowly back, fighting over every inch of ground.

Some of Washington's men had failed him.

They had failed to perform the duties given them by the commander-in-chief, and the day was lost.

Slowly the provincials withdrew, but at the very last Wayne, who could not believe that the day was lost, ordered a last charge upon the Chew House, and the men tightened their belts and responded with a shout.

Once more they rushed into the jaws of death.

The color bearers picked up their flags and darted through the rain of iron and lead.

Once more fire blazed from every window, and again the gallant ranks recoiled.

"Back! back! for heaven's sake!" came from the old house, and the two young captains heard.

Thank heaven, Priscilla was alive! She had escaped death in the house and was begging her friends to save themselves.

Back from the Chew House fell the patriots.

They had to reform in an open place to resist the charge of Cornwallis' men.

Down the street came the redcoats.

They met a solid line of buff and blue, and saw before them the tried veterans of Washington.

"Fire!" roared a colonel as the ranks seemed to meet and the volley that met the enemy blocked the street with redcoats.

The red column reeled.

Again the volley was poured into the same place, more went down, officers tumbled over privates, and friend and foe were mingled together in horrid death.

The fog came on thicker and thicker.

It seemed to hide everything in sight. It enveloped the Americans and lost for them the battle.

Washington turned from the steps of Billmeyer's house with blanched face.

He knew he had failed—failed just when victory was in his grasp; failed when he was in the very act of duplicating the glory of Trenton.

He met Wayne blackened with powder and held out his hand.

"It is lost!"

Wayne in reply turned and looked at the line that still resisted the foe, and his lips came together.

"Shall I charge again?" asked Mad Anthony. "You have but to say the word ——"

"No," broke in Washington. "We must bide our time again."

That was all.

The Americans fell back, resisting so stubbornly that the enemy durst not follow.

They had punished the eighteen thousand so terribly that they could not strike a responsive blow. The fog lifted a little and Washington screened his eyes from the awful sight. Then he mounted his white horse and rode away at the head of his heroes.

CHAPTER XVIII

IN CHEW'S HOUSE

LET us see what transpired within the walls of the Chew House during the battle.

The three young girls cooped up in the old mansion had been aroused at daybreak by the first shots of Germantown.

They dressed as hastily as possible and looked out of the doors.

They saw a lot of horsemen dashing hither and thither, saw men wheeling into the street, stripped for battle, and wondered what it all meant.

Had Washington really marched upon Howe? Had the lion of liberty turned the tables on the foe once more and was Trenton and Princeton to be duplicated?

Soon came more shots, then a furious volley and redcoats came plunging back, shouting to their comrades that the enemy was upon them.

Mistress Peggy stood in the door while her cheeks flushed and her eyes grew animated.

Priscilla and Bess looked over her shoulders and as the British streamed down the street they caught sight of the girls and shouted to them to close the doors.

But something seemed to hold them on the threshold and despite the ping, ping of musket balls, they held their post.

Suddenly there dashed up the lawn a handsome officer whom the young ladies recognized as Lieutenant Cummings, of banquet fame.

"Go in, young ladies!" he shouted. "It is going to be hot here in a few moments."

In another half second the young lieutenant reeled in his saddle and pitched clear over his horse's neck, falling at full length on the grass.

With a cry Mistress Bess sprang from the house and reached his side.

She lifted the young officer's head, but saw that all was over.

In another instant the whole road was full of red-

coats who had faced about and were firing at the enemy.

On, on came Wayne and Sullivan.

For a moment the Quaker-Tory's niece stood undecided, but as the bullets began to sing their death song about her, she turned and ran for the mansion.

Mistress Peggy shut the heavy door, and was about to batten it, when Colonel Musgrave reached it.

His men were at his back.

They threw themselves against the portal and, as it opened, the girls saw the house fill with the king's men.

"Up-stairs, young ladies!" cried Musgrave. "This house is to be defended."

Man after man poured inside till every available space was filled and the British took position at the windows.

The three girls hastened to the second story, but the redcoats followed them and broke in the windows with their muskets. Resistance was depicted on every face, and for a few moments the girls watched the soldiers speechless and frightened.

They were now in the largest room on the second floor, a room that fronted the lawn, where the statues were.

Their faces were blanched and they withdrew to the rear part of the room while the soldiers stood at the windows with ready muskets.

From the cursings of the soldiers they could learn that the British were falling back, and Musgrave called out to the men to stand firm.

"Fight to the last!" he exclaimed. "We hold the key to victory in this house. It cannot be taken. We must die if need be where we are. Stand by the cause of the king, men! Don't miss a shot, but pour it into the breasts of the rebels!"

The determined men needed no such words to make them do their duty.

The three girls saw all this, for as yet death had not visited the interior of the house, but the time was near at hand when it was to be transformed into a shambles.

Presently they heard something crash through the house and a lot of plastering fell over them like rain.

They looked at one another and were silent till Priscilla spoke.

"A cannon-ball," she said with the semblance of a smile on her face.

In another second two red-coated soldiers lurched back from one of the windows and fell to the floor.

Priscilla uttered a cry.

One of the men lay at her feet, his youngish face upturned to her and upon it was the gathering shade of death.

The sash was broken, pieces of it flew across the room and the bullets of the Americans tore through the ceiling.

Those at the windows replied to the volley and the room for a moment was filled with stifling smoke.

The British in the house shouted to one another, bidding all stand firm.

Those on the lower floor replied to the voices of their comrades above and the din of battle increased.

"What was that?" whispered Mistress Chew to her companions as a terrible noise reverberated throughout the mansion.

It seemed as though half a dozen cannon-balls had torn through the mansion simultaneously.

She darted from the room, Priscilla and Bess after her.

"To the stair!" cried Peggy Chew.

They swept down the corridor to the head of the stair, but there the girls drew back with horror.

Half a dozen men lay on the steps bathed in their own blood.

"The room is the safer place," said Mistress Chew, and back they went.

The fight outside was now raging with redoubled fury.

The Americans were devoting their energies toward the reduction of the mansion and were assaulting it with all their fury.

"Would you look a moment!" cried a young sergeant to the girls as he turned to them.

With one accord they darted to the window.

The sight that met their gaze almost drove their hearts from their bosoms.

They saw the Boys of Liberty rushing upon the house backed by the older veterans of the Legion.

Then it was that Priscilla pushed the nearest soldier aside and warned her friends of their danger.

She was caught round the waist and thrown back across the room.

At the same time a volley came from the patriots and the man who had seized her spun round and tottered against the wall.

From that time on the battle raged with undiminished fury.

The room would be filled with smoke one moment and the next it would drift away revealing the determined defenders of the old mansion.

Men fell back from the windows at every volley from without.

A young captain ran over to the girls and in a spirit of bravado held out his arm showing them where a bullet had crashed through the bone.

"A Yankee souvenir!" he said with a grin; but a moment afterward he fell at their feet, dead!

"Go to the cellar!" cried Colonel Musgrave as he

came up-stairs and found the three friends in the room. "You will share the fate of those soldiers on the floor if you remain here."

"The basement is filled with our men firing through the windows there," said a soldier, and Colonel Musgrave smiled.

"I forgot," he said.

"Will our friends take the house?" asked Priscilla of her white-faced companions.

"I fear not from the spirit of the defenders. They seem determined to hold the house at all hazard."

"What is this I hear?" and Colonel Musgrave appeared before the three girls. "They tell me that there is a secret powder magazine in the house."

Mistress Chew seemed to increase in stature.

"How is this?" repeated the Briton. "If there is buried ammunition in the house we want it, for our supply is running out."

"Yes," cried another officer running up. "The powder! quick!"

Peggy Chew did not speak.

"You can't hide it from us. The king's men need it. The powder! Mistress Chew."

"There is no powder in the house."

"But the magazine?"

"I have just told you there is no powder in the house."

"But one of your servants has just informed me to the contrary. Come, where is the powder?

"Show me the servant."

"He ran from the house a while ago."

"What was he like?"

"Never mind that. We want the powder that is in the mansion."

"Colonel Musgrave, is not the word of a lady something in the eyes of a British soldier?"

"It is under all circumstances, but this is war, Mistress Chew, and we must have the powder."

Looking him firmly in the face, Mistress Peggy said coolly:

"There is no powder in the house."

"Will you swear it?"

"Yes."

The young girl was lifting her hand when Colonel Musgrave pressed it downward.

"I believe you," he said, and turned away.

Then came another fierce attack and the men at the windows fired with precision.

They had grown into engines of destruction and were fighting with a tenacity of purpose worthy of a better cause.

The room had now become a shambles.

Men lay on the floor, on the stairs, and in the rooms below.

Their comrades pulled them from the windows and took their places without a word.

"They're in our rear!" cried half a dozen men at once, and there was a rush for the back windows.

Priscilla was there first and saw the movement we have already described.

The Boys of Liberty were behind the house, but she knew that they could not succeed.

Again she sounded a warning and was pulled back by a pair of strong arms.

She was thrown against Mistress Bess and the two girls went to the blood-stained floor together.

They heard the fierce volley before they could rise and then saw a young sergeant pitch backward and strike the wall with a horrible thud.

For nearly an hour raged the fight for Chew's house.

It was so well defended that even Wayne at last saw the futility of longer battling for it and we have seen how reluctantly he drew off his gallant Legion.

The girls could hardly believe that the battle had ended.

They saw the soldiers at the windows wipe their weapons and draw their sleeves over their begrimed faces. They looked more like demons than men.

Once Priscilla thought the battle was renewed, for a few straggling shots came in at the windows and one knocked a lot of plastering into her eyes.

"At last!" cried Peggy Chew. "It is over!"

"Thank God!" fervently breathed Bess Ferguson.

"We have annihilated the rebels," shouted a Britisher as he turned upon the girls. "The rebellion is at an end!"

"At an end?" answered Priscilla with a grim smile. "You do not know the men who are fighting for liberty."

"What, me young hussy?" he cried as he advanced upon her. "Do you still preach treason with your friends flying out yonder? By my soul! you're pretty enough to kiss."

Priscilla's face flamed indignantly as she drew back from the grenadier.

"If you dare, sir!" she exclaimed.

"I never take a dare, especially not from a pretty rebel. Come, my fair Venus, give me a kiss for the victory we have won over the rabble of Washington."

Priscilla caught up a musket which stood against the wall, the barrel of which was still warm, and thrust the bayonet into the soldier's face.

He drew back with an oath.

"If you dare, sir!" her blazing eyes said louder than words.

She gripped the gun with stern determination and the fellow fell back defeated.

Then the British began to gather up their dead and

wounded and soon afterward the three girls had old Chew House to themselves and the battle of Germantown was over.

It had cost Washington nearly one thousand brave men, and but for the fog and the failure of some of his officers—but why speculate? It was a great fight and added to the fame of liberty's chieftain.

CHAPTER XIX

A DASH FOR LIBERTY

THE mist rose slowly from the battle-field of Germantown.

Washington, sitting on his white steed on the summit of Mount Airy, looked back over the ground so nearly won and sighed. Wayne drew rein beside him and the hand of the chieftain pointed toward the blood-drenched spot.

"It was nearly won," said Wayne.

"Nearly won!" echoed Washington. "We will do better next time. You did well—they all did well who fought to-day. We cannot expect a victory every time."

With this the champion of liberty gathered up his reins, and, with another look, rode from the fatal field.

The enemy held possession of the ground.

The redcoats lay everywhere.

Howe had lost the flower of his army. The Hes-

sians were sadly decimated, for they had fought for the king with dogged determination.

He had bought them with a price, and they had not deceived him.

Men came and turned the Chew House into a hospital, but not for long.

The three girls, left to themselves at last, saw the day wane and night settle slowly over the battle-field.

Their hearts were sore, for Washington had been defeated, but they mourned more for the brave men who had fallen in defense of human liberty.

On the other hand Lieutenant Cummings had fallen, and General Huston, to whom Bess promised her hand when the king should proclaim the colonies free and independent, lay dead on the ground of Germantown.

He would never exact the fulfillment of her promise.

When night came and silence settled round Chew House the girls walked over the lawn and saw how it had been ruined.

The marble statues had been broken by cannon-balls and the two lions had lost their heads.

The old stone mansion had been defaced, the windows broken in, and the eaves cut by musket balls.

The great doors were riddled and almost staggered from their hinges.

As they turned back to the house they saw a figure halt in front of it and gaze at the old pile.

This person wore the uniform of a British officer, and, when he stepped back, he heard the voice of Peggy Chew behind him.

"So you escaped the carnage, major?" she said.

It was John André.

"I escaped," he said, bowing to the girls. "This has been a bloody day. We have lost some excellent men and Washington is no better off. I am glad to find you ladies unhurt."

"We escaped fortunately," said Priscilla. "We were in the house all the time——"

"So I have been told," broke in André. "The raging gods of battle spared you fair ones."

"We are thankful."

"But, ladies," he looked more particularly at Bess

and Priscilla, "I am here on a delicate mission. You are to quit Germantown."

"We?" exclaimed Mistress Beverley.

"Such is the order from General Howe. You shall have your choice, either to follow the rebel army or to be escorted back to Philadelphia."

"But they are my guests!" exclaimed Peggy Chew. "I am not yet tired of their company. General Howe does not intend to rob me of my friends, does he?"

"I am only carrying out his commands," was the reply.

"We will choose. What time have we?"

"An hour, he says."

"At the end of an hour, Major André, you can come for our reply."

Major André doffed his hat, and withdrew.

The three girls reëntered the old mansion.

"This is cruel!" cried Mistress Chew as she threw her arms around her fair guests. "General Howe is afraid of you."

"He knows our sentiments," said Priscilla. "He cannot really fear us after he has won a victory."

"He is a strange quantity, is Lord Howe. Perhaps he thinks you furnished Washington with some information which enabled him to bring about the surprise."

Both Priscilla and Bess laughed.

"Which shall it be, Bess?" asked the fair Boston rebel. "Shall it be Washington's camp or Philadelphia?"

"My uncle would hardly receive me with much cordiality," was the response. "I could go back to him and have the victory at Germantown dinned into my ears all the time. That would not be pleasant. I believe I shall elect to cast my fortunes with Washington."

"That will exile you from the city and its pleasures."

"True, but it will remove me to friends. Philadelphia, with its Tories, is almost a king's stronghold. I suspect I would ever be banned from society there, still there would be some satisfaction in going back. I could tell them how the 'rabble' fought at Germantown."

"That would be something."

A few minutes later footsteps were heard at the doors, and as they swung open a captain in red, with a file of soldiers at his back, stood before the startled girls.

"What is it now?" demanded Peggy Chew.

"We are to escort the young ladies, who are your guests, from the camp."

"But we have been given an hour to decide whither we wish to go."

"We cannot help that. We are under orders."

"Orders from whom?"

"General Howe."

"Then he has changed his mind?"

"I cannot say."

"But a short time ago he sent Major André thither with orders different from yours."

"He may have changed his mind. You will get ready and go with us, Mistresses Ferguson and Beverley."

"Where is General Howe?" cried Peggy Chew, stamping her little foot indignantly.

"He has just left for Philadelphia."

"This is an outrage! I shall go with my friends. Whither are they to be conducted?"

"To the city."

"Why back yonder?"

"I must refer you to General Howe."

There was no alternative but to obey.

Priscilla and Bess slipped up-stairs, avoiding the crimson stains on the steps, and prepared to depart.

Peggy came after them.

"Where are the horses?" asked Bess Ferguson with flashing eyes.

"In the stables."

"And the servants?"

"I haven't seen one since the battle."

"I don't care to go back to the city to hear the taunts of my Tory friends," said the Quaker's niece. "I prefer the sighs of the rebel rabble."

"And I!" echoed Priscilla.

"Then the horses!" cried Peggy Chew. "I will remain and brave the wrath of Howe."

A minute later the three girls glided from the old

house by the back exits and reached the stables, which had not been much injured during the fight.

Mistress Chew found the saddles in the semi-darkness, and the two riders were soon caparisoned.

As the horses were led forth Priscilla looked toward the road.

"There are horses out yonder," she said in low tones.

"A troop of Walbecks, doubtless. They passed the house just before sunset."

"If they should hear us ——"

"Come! They have not heard us yet," cried Bess. "We can give these thick-headed foreigners the slip."

The two girls were mounted in a jiffy.

Peggy Chew held up her hand.

"You can't miss the road. You pass over Mount Airy and keep the broad highway. You will be in the wake of Washington's army all the time."

"Thank you, dear. I trust you will not be subjected to any indignities."

"Never fear for me. Peggy Chew will take care of herself."

There was a look and a little laugh as Priscilla and Bess gathered up the lines.

"Good-night," said Peggy.

"Good-night," responded the others.

The next second the horses sprang forward.

"Now for Washington's camp!" exclaimed Priscilla to her fair companion. "We may have to race for it, but the Chew horses are of good mettle."

As they struck the road just beyond the stables they heard voices behind them.

"We are in for it!" cried Bess. "It is to be a test of mettle!"

Away sprang the Chew horses, and in the road behind them was seen a glint of helmets, as half a dozen burly horsemen pursued.

The girls caught the rattle of heavy sabres, and then the loud voices of those behind them.

The Walbecks had heard them and suspected.

Bending over their horses' necks the two fair ones gave them the whip and were off again like the wind.

They kept close together, for the road was in fair

view, and in a short time they fancied they had left their pursuers far behind.

But this soon proved to be a delusion.

Nearer came the chasseurs, and their voices became more distinct.

They were urging their steeds to greater efforts, and now and then the girls heard the mad German oaths of the king's dragoons.

"My girth has slipped!" suddenly cried Bess. "I cannot ride far thus."

Priscilla leaned toward her friend and looked at the loosened saddle.

Then she looked back over her shoulder and caught sight of dark figures plunging between her and the spot of sky.

"They are coming!" she cried. "We shall soon have the Germans upon us."

Bess Ferguson bit her lips in vexation and looked at the enemy.

"I shall not go back without leaving my mark on the leader of the chasseurs!" she exclaimed. "It will be humiliation to go back with them."

"That it will, but ——"

"This way!" interrupted the Tory's niece. "Here is a by-road. I can jump the fence with my horse if the saddle will hold a moment longer."

They darted down a narrower road and the horses cleared the stone fence that seemed to bar their progress.

"Hurrah!" shouted Bess in the excitement of the moment. "Now let the king's dragoons do as well!"

The first rider of the red-coated band came up and his horse refused the leap.

In vain did he give him the spurs and curse his refusal to jump.

Meantime the girls were riding like the wind down the frowsy by-road, Bess clinging desperately to the swaying saddle, and nearly beside herself with excitement.

At last two of the horses cleared the fence and came on.

They were determined to overtake the fair fugitives.

Past a farmhouse dashed the girls.

Behind them thundered the dragoons, lashing their steeds to better efforts and shouting in the excitement of the chase.

"The pistols! Now! It is the critical time," said Priscilla, looking at the weapon which Mistress Chew had placed in her hand on parting.

Silently the girls, looking over their shoulders, drew the pistols and cocked them.

"We may not have to use them after all," said Bess. "Let us wait a moment."

The dragoons came on with the same fury.

They were now shouting at the two girls.

"Now!" said Mistress Priscilla. "Let them have it hit or miss!"

They turned in their saddles as well as they could and let drive into the faces of the foe.

The reports of the weapons echoed far and wide.

Two horsemen behind them suddenly drew rein.

"One seems struck!" cried Bess. "On! on! Priscilla dear!"

The girls shouted at the steeds; they reached a turn in the road and their faces blanched.

They had ridden almost into the midst of a body of mounted men who looked like spectres in the night!

CHAPTER XX

THE PEACE OF WAR

To the utter surprise of the girls the ranks opened and they dashed through.

They looked at one another amazed.

What did it mean? Who were those mounted men that they should let them pass through their lines and then close up and face the chasseurs?

They soon discovered that they had fallen into the company of a squadron of Pulaski's men who had come back toward Germantown upon a reconnoitering expedition.

The mustached men intervened between the young misses and the enemy, and the two chasseurs, seeing what had happened, turned tail and scampered back, followed for some distance by the sabering riders of Pulaski.

When the pursuers returned they gathered round Priscilla and Bess and, upon learning who they were, offered to escort them to the American army, an offer

which was gratefully accepted, and the broken girth was mended, and all turned their faces toward the little camp some miles away.

"It's a shame that we couldn't take the Chew House!" exclaimed a young fellow, who was cleaning a gun in the light of a camp-fire.

"They were too much for us, Tom. We will do better next time."

"Yes, but when will that next time come?"

"We must wait. Washington will not remain idle long. We will soon meet the enemy, and, I trust, will see his back though we didn't effect a great deal in that direction to-day."

"I tell you, Captain Benjamin, it was jolly good fighting for all that. The way we went at that house was a caution, and I'll venture that they carried a lot of redcoats out of it after the battle."

"You may be sure of that, Tom," was the reply. "I saw more than one fall back from the windows during the engagement."

"Got their everlasting discharge, didn't they?"

"Yes."

"Now, if we could only hear how Mistress Beverley fared it would soften the defeat. I saw her face at one of the windows, but it was gone in a moment. She was cooped up in that house with the soldiers, and, with Mistress Chew, must have suffered great agony of mind."

"I am anxious on the same score myself," responded Captain Pierce. "Perchance we will hear from her by to-morrow, for she will surely let us know how she fared during the fight."

"What's become of Captain Frank?"

"He is over at Wayne's headquarters, whither he has been summoned by the general."

"Then he has heard nothing from Priscilla?"

"Why should he?" cried Benjamin with a little touch of jealousy in his voice. "She would be as likely to communicate with me as any one."

"Be you sure of that, Captain Ben?" asked Tom with a humorous leer on his face.

"I should say so. Why, you look as though you doubted my word. I don't see why you should."

"Oh, well," laughed Tom, as he turned to the

musket again. "All's fair in love and war; but it seems to me that the outcome at Germantown wasn't so very fair for us."

"There you go again, harping and crying over spilled milk," exclaimed Captain Pierce. "We did our share, I think. The Boys of Liberty suffered greatly in the fight, but we came out of it with the proud knowledge that we received the praises of Washington himself."

"And I notice that he praises no one just for the sake of doing so."

"But, Tom," and Benjamin looked searchingly at the young Long Islander, "what think you of the smiles of Mistress Beverley?"

"They're mighty nice, Captain Ben."

"I don't mean that," pursued Benjamin. "I mean upon whom, think you, she bestows the better ones."

"Now that puts me in a ticklish place," and Tom leaned back and looked at the young leader of the Boys of Liberty. "I'd rather not give an opinion on this—this delicate subject. In the next place, I'm not an expert in such matters, for I'm only a rough

country boy who used to trap foxes on Long Island, and the only girl I ever thought anything of flared up on me one morning, because I caught her tame fox in the trap, and the animal lost his pretty tail. So you see, Captain Ben, I'd rather be excused."

"But what if I command you as your captain to express an opinion?"

"Oh, that might be a different thing," was the reply. "I always obey orders."

A smile came to Benjamin's lips.

"Then, as the commander of the Boys of Liberty, I command you to give your opinion."

Tom looked away and seemed to be collecting his thoughts.

"Well, if I must say it, Captain Ben—if you will have my opinion, which may not amount to much after all ——"

"Oh! come to the point, Tom," broke in the impatient young patriot. "Don't beat round the bush till you knock all the leaves off."

"I'll do my best. Now, as I was saying ——"

Just then the tramping of horses was heard and Tom sprang up.

"The foreigners!" he cried. "Pulaski's troopers by my life! And look yonder, Captain Ben. They've got two girls with them!"

Benjamin was also upon his feet and, with Tom, was gazing with speechless wonder upon the scene before him.

"'Tis Priscilla!" Tom Hapgood heard him exclaim. "She has come to camp, and with a friend."

Benjamin started forward when he saw another person disengage himself from among the dragoons.

He started back with a low, half-articulate cry.

"It will never do," he said. "Captain Lowry must always poke himself to the fore!"

He saw Frank assist Priscilla to the ground, while a trooper performed the same service for Bess, and when Priscilla noticed Benjamin she came forward with extended hand.

"We've had another adventure," she said as her eyes looked merriment. "We've had a race with the

king's dragoons, and, but for these gallants here, we should have lost."

Benjamin swallowed his feelings as well as he could, and welcomed Priscilla to the camp of Washington.

The next day Benjamin and Frank escorted the two girls around the camp, but first of all they went to the headquarters of Washington, where they were received by that great man in the kindliest manner, and he thanked them for everything they had done for the cause of liberty.

"I trust you will not be long absent from Philadelphia," Washington said to Mistress Bess. "The enemy holds the vantage ground just now, but the cause for which we are battling is not lost, and the sun, clouded just now, some day will shine forth with renewed splendor."

To this sentiment both young ladies responded in fitting words, and Washington smiled again.

"Where's your Mad Anthony?" queried Bess of the boys. "I would like to take his hand, after the way he fought yesterday."

"Here he comes now."

The little group stopped and the hero of Germantown came up and saluted.

"I have just heard of your adventure," cried Mad Anthony, as he took the girls' hands. "You were fortunate in falling into the care of Count Pulaski's men."

"We couldn't have raced much farther," responded Priscilla, "for our horses were well blown and fagged."

"But you must have ridden like the wind, for those Walbecks are Centaurs in the saddle."

Priscilla laughed.

"They certainly did try to catch us, general, and that they did not was no fault of theirs."

Wayne turned away after a few more pleasant words and Bess Ferguson, looking after him, said with enthusiasm:

"No wonder you can fight under such a leader. He is the very beau ideal of a soldier. He must inspire his men on the battle-field and I saw yesterday how he led his men against the Chew House. He

reminded me of some ancient god leading his giants to war."

"Mad Anthony is a giant," cried Frank. "We would follow him to the death."

"Which I trust you may never be compelled to do," responded Priscilla.

At this Benjamin winced, for, when the fair rebel spoke, she looked at Captain Frank.

The next day, and the next, the two girls were guests in Washington's camp.

Tom Hapgood made himself agreeable whenever he encountered them, and they were charmed with the story of adventures he told them.

Time came when the American army moved toward its winter quarters, for the enemy did not seek to molest it, and while the war grew fierce by spurts in other quarters, Washington saw that he must rest his legions of liberty for another campaign.

By and by Mistress Bess Ferguson went back to Philadelphia, where her beauty and vivacity rendered her a social favorite, and Priscilla took occasion to revisit her old home in Boston.

But she promised that she would soon come forth to other portions of the colonies, as she had friends whom she declared she would visit despite the war.

"Never fear for me," she said to Captain Frank, on parting. "I shall be able to take care of myself. General Howe probably would not exempt me from the operations of his field orders again. But I may never come in contact with him any more during the war. Oh, yes, Captain Lowry, I think a great deal of both of you. Yourself and Benjamin I count dear friends of mine, and I am at all times pleased to hear of the Boys of Liberty. They fight like veterans and your Mad Anthony must be proud of them."

"Which he is," was the reply, as Frank dropped Priscilla's hand. "I wish you a safe journey back to Boston."

"I do not expect to go for a few days, and something may occur to keep me away."

The Boys of Liberty recruited their ranks after the bloody day at Germantown and followed the fortunes of the army.

Mad Anthony complimented them in his general orders, saying they were among the best veterans in the army, which was high praise indeed, and Frank and Benjamin, with Tom Hapgood, who had been made a sergeant, felt a flush of pride tingle their cheeks.

The young British captain Montressor fought for his king to the close of hostilities and did good service with his sword.

What if Washington failed at Germantown?

He had inflicted a stunning blow upon the enemy and had taught him a lesson he greatly needed. Howe said after the battle that he believed Washington never slept.

The fight for the Chew House was the turning point of the engagement, and it would have been successful, but for circumstances over which the Americans had no control.

The time was coming when things were to take a turn, for Burgoyne was pouring down from Canada with his legions and the great campaign of 1777 was at hand.

Thus the time was near when the new banner of freedom would float from the roof of Chew's House, and when Mistress Peggy could stand on the steps and welcome Washington.

Germantown, contrary to the boasts of the British, did not end the war. There were still to come many exciting scenes and daring deeds in which the young members of Mad Anthony's Legion were to take part; but they would never forget the 4th of October when, above the roar of battle, and the singing of British bullets, they heard THE DRUMS OF GERMANTOWN.

THE END

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